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Media with passion

In the March 2004 issue NGC inadvertently used a picture taken from the Internet to illustrate an article. We apologise for any concern that this may have caused and have taken the necessary action to ensure that this does not happen again.

A LINK TO THE THE FUTURE

It's all hands to chins, chewing on the ends of pens and thoughtful glances out of the **NGC** office window this month. E3 – the biggest videogame show on God's Earth – takes place in a matter of weeks. It's the place the future of videogames gatecrashes the present for four loud days in May. Naturally, it's the announcements from Nintendo – the home of videogames – that everyone's gearing up for. This month we bring you a brief insight into the games we think everyone'll be talking about.

But we haven't *really* got time to ponder the future. There's too much of that now business going on. Take *Pokémon Colosseum*: we've got a sprawling 10-page celebration of Nintendo's 3D RPG. We've got eight pages devoted to *Zelda: Four Swords +*, a title that's proved eye-openingly remarkable on its Japanese release. And there's even *Mission: Impossible Operation Surma* – a game we held out little hope for, but which actually goes some way to rectifying the bad feeling left by its N64 predecessor. We bring you the latest on Nintendo DS, the first play of *Resident Evil 4* and yes – *yes!* – the return of Mark Green to **NGC**. It's a great month – hope you enjoy the issue.

Team NGC
NGC@futurenet.co.uk



TURN OVER THE PAGE!
To see how much great stuff we've managed to pack into of NGC!



TURN TO PAGE 42
To get the **NGC** verdict on this month's big game…

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!
Go to page 112, where for a small amount of cash you can get three free issues and a free joypad. No excuses!

WHY WE'RE No.1 FOR NINTENDO

NGC's the result of over a decade of gaming genius – so you're the best-informed Nintendo gamer around.



■ First there was the SNES, and Super Play came out alongside it – fanboys rejoiced.

■ A new machine meant a new magazine – but one with the same high standards.

■ Now we've got Gamecube, and you've got **NGC**. Over a decade of Ninty love here…



NGC'S FIVE STAR GUIDE TO WHAT'S UNMISSABLE THIS ISSUE!

POKÉMON COLOSSEUM

WE'VE GOT IT! Could this be the Pokémon RPG we've all been waiting for?

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: FOUR SWORDS +

SHOCKING! It's really *really* great!

£5 OFF POKÉMON COLOSSEUM YOUR VOUCHER'S ON P50

PAGE 42

POKÉMON COLOSSEUM

BRINGING POKÉMON OUT OF THE SHADOWS

"THIS ISN'T QUITE THE HAPPY, CUTESY POKÉMON YOU'VE GROWN ACCUSTOMED TO PLAYING ON YOUR GAME BOY"

MEET ENJiKi

Enjiki's caught 'em all – every single Pokémon, locked safely away in Pokéballs. If there's one thing that can be relied on, it's Enjiki's pursuit of all things cute and cuddly. Or chocolate flavoured. One of these days we're going to give her a cocoa-covered Pikachu and see what she does with it. Current betting is that she'll flay him with a potato peeler and eat his sweet, melting chocolate skin…



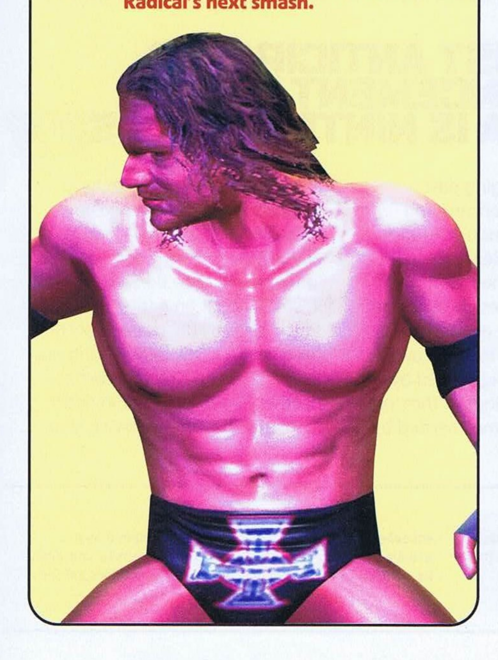
WHAT'S IN NGC?

More fun than you'd think we could cram into one month!

PREVIEWS

Early looks at games to come.





NEWS

What's happening in Nintyland



EXTENDED PLAY

Getting more from your favourite games

REVIEWS

Ways to blow your hard-earned cash





NGC BRINGING YOU NEWS FIRST

NEWSDESK

IN NEWS THIS MONTH

CLASSIC NES GBA AND GAMES! P8

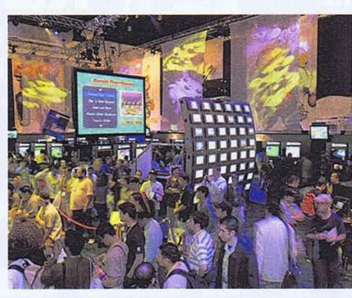
PAPER MARIO! THE FAT MAN'S BACK! P8

TWICE THE ZELDA LOVE! FOR GAMECUBE AND DS! P10

DEF JAM 2 MORE BAD-BOY POSTURING P8

PLUS!
- E3 Round up!
- *Fire Emblem GC!*

& MORE!


△ Looks like a lot of fun, right? Playing games all day and er, playing some…



△ …more games. Well, truth be known, it's total chaos down there – when you…



△ …leave the show, you can hardly walk and your hearing takes months to return.

THE GLOVES COME OFF…

WITH E3 BUT A MONTH AWAY, NINTENDO ARE POISED TO LAY THEIR SHOW-STOPPING CARDS ON THE TABLE…

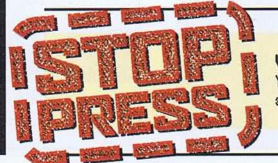

△ There he is. They wheel him out every year for a spot of Shigsy love.

Yup. It's that time of the year again. The games industry's spring-time willy-waving expo, where the big guns the world over come to show off (and size up) each other's assets. As usual **NGC** will be hauling our collective asses over to Los Angeles to do ourselves the annual injury that inevitably arises from walking 3,000 miles a day on the show floor, barging past freebie-hungry Americans and hob-nobbing with industry-types. It's a dirty job. No. Really.

It's no surprise then, that we always pin our hopes on the event being a worthwhile endeavour for Nintendo. We want to come away feeling proud, feeling excited by potential new offerings at their pre-E3 conference and mesmerised by the quality of the playable code on the show floor (something we'll have a closer look at later). So what do Nintendo *really* need to do this year for a successful E3 presence? What can we expect them to roll out on stage (apart from Shigsy) and what do we reckon will make for the most pleasant surprises?

The biggest, most anticipated 'thing' on the agenda, of course, is Nintendo's DS. It's especially important for Nintendo to have playable machines on the show floor. They've been banging on about how everyone will 'understand' once they've touched it, so it's about time they *let us* touch it. It's all the more important because Sony will be wheeling out PSP, and although Nintendo have been saying that it's not in direct competition with the device, you

> "THE MOST ANTICIPATED ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE AGENDA IS NINTENDO'S DS"



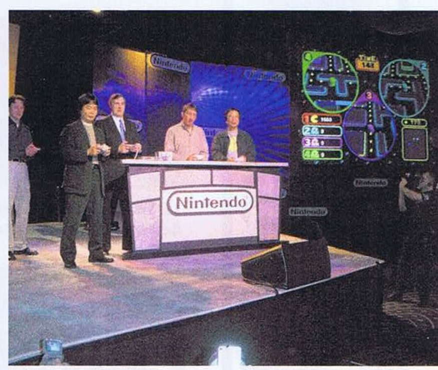
VIEWTIFUL JOE 2! Yes indeedy! Capcom have announced a sequel to their highly acclaimed 2D scrolling scrapper. This time Joe will be accompanied by his missus, Silvia, who can be controlled by a second player. Expect even slicker visuals and even more skills than before.

WHEN NINTENDO GO BAD

In our opinion, some earlier E3s haven't been great PR exercises for Nintendo. Our fondest faux-pas was the now-infamous enthusiastic unveiling of *Pac-Man Vs* at last year's E3, accompanied by a 'collapsible dome' in the centre Nintendo's stand, where badge-throwing girls would appear on cue, dancing around to music made by two men in futuristic boiler suits. Really. A few years before that we had the 'Conker' bar, complete with a 'no-minors' door policy and disinterested ladies handing out weak baby-lager. Oh, and lest we forget, their pre-ECTS show in London had a gospel choir opening the proceedings. We love you Nintendo!







△ Ouch! "Ta da da! It's *Pac-Man* everybody – and if you want to play it you have to buy *Ridge Racer*!"



△ The pre-E3 conferences are where all the major announcements get made before the show starts.

NGC E3 WISH LIST

WE'VE PUT OUR COLLECTIVE HEADS TOGETHER AND COMPILED A LITTLE LIST OF DOS AND DON'TS…

- Please, Nintendo *please* – no more updated retro nonsense. *Pac-Man Vs* was nice, but you can't make something like that your 'big news'.
- Playable DS. You have to make the device playable at the show. With Sony's PSP looming on the horizon, failure to wheel out DS would be tantamount to bending over and letting Ken Kutaragi give you a spanking.
- At least some hints towards the next generation of consoles. Make the clues as cryptic as you like but at least acknowledge their existence.
- You know those 'new peripherals' you've been talking about? If it turns out to be your 'big' memory card then you'll reduce us to tears.
- Go on. Just for a laugh, tell those Americans in the front row that you've got *Kid Icarus* and a 'Realistic Zelda' in the works. And then laugh. It'll be funny.
- You haven't forgotten *Pilotwings64* and *Excitebike 64* have you? They were both pretty good if we remember correctly…
- The world doesn't revolve around GBA connectivity. It won't solve world poverty or global warming… Just remember that…
- At the end of the pre-E3 conference, how about chucking some sweets into the crowd. Our favourites are Miniature Heroes and Haribo Starmix.

Cheers Shigeru!

can bet your lucky underpants that the topic on everyone's lips will be 'PSP vs DS'.

One way of cementing Nintendo's superiority in this battle will be to have a collection of excellent, inventive first-party software demonstrating the benefits of the dual-screen technology. Miyamoto himself told us he was working on two undisclosed titles. Hopefully the old magic will convince the crowds at E3.

So, what about surprises? Well, as we reported a couple of months ago, Nintendo have "a number of unique peripherals… complementary technical advances that we believe will significantly enhance the gaming experience – exciting ways to extend the value of Gamecube." So said an official Nintendo statement. We've heard nothing about this hardware since, and our curiosity is at boiling point. Geraint, for example, is convinced that the Nintendo VR headset is on its way, letting him 'be' Diddy Kong. Fool. Whatever it is, we hope it's significantly mind-blowing enough to warrant Nintendo delaying the much-wanted N5 announcement.

> **"TECHNICAL ADVANCES THAT WILL ENHANCE THE GAMING EXPERIENCE"**

The rest of the battle will inevitably be fought with software. Nintendo already have a selection of highly anticipated titles lined up – *Metroid Prime 2*, *Zelda: WW 2* and the next *Starfox* to name but three. These we know about, but Nintendo still have a number of big-name franchises that have yet to see a Gamecube release – *Pilotwings* and *Excitebike* being prime examples. We're not saying that these titles will be announced, but we're sure that Nintendo (as they nearly always do) will have plenty of extra little surprises other than those that have already been announced.

Flick over to page 10 to see the titles we're confident will make an appearance…

SHORT CUTS

THANKS FOR THE MEMORY

Nintendo are, at long last, going to release a memory card with greater saving capacity. The new Memory Card 1019 will be able to store almost four times as much data as the current official cards available. The new capacity card is set to be released in the US in June with Europe to follow suit shortly afterwards. This is especially good news for fans of EA's savemungous sports games, such as *Madden NFL* and *Tiger Woods* as, ordinarily, they require a brand-new memory card for those of us still using the original '59' capacity.

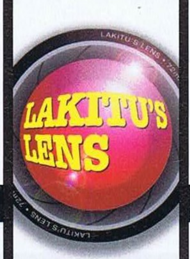


3D GBA!

Konami are releasing a GBA game called (wait for it) *Pyuu to Fuku! Jaguar: Byo to Deru! Megane Kun.* Based on a manga, the game's main feature is that the use of special glasses will gave the game a 3D appearance. A bit like you used to get years ago on the back of cereals. Or like you get at an Imax cinema. Yes.

THE FALCON RETURNS! At long last, we have a release date for the GBA sequel of F-Zero: Maximum Velocity. Called F-Zero: Falcon Densetsu in Japan (and awarded an 80% score in NGC/91) F-Zero: GP Legend, features a Story mode to sit alongside the more traditional GP races. It's out on June the 4th.

LAST MINUTE RUMOUR! We recently caught wind of two rumours – a sequel to Skies of Arcadia Legends and a new Castlevania game for Gamecube. More soon.



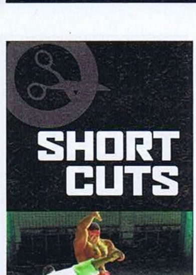
Seen Peach singing Celine Dion 'classics' on Stars in Their Eyes? Mario showing off his prize parsnips on the regional news? Let us know...



WRITE TO LAKITU'S LENS, **NGC**, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW

Christine Munro from Salford is this month's winner with a clip from 'Grim and Evil' showing kids playing President Evil on the – get this – Lamecube! Ha ha ha ha Lame! Haha Cube! Haha. Genius

Successful entries sent with picture evidence will win a GC game



SHORT CUTS

DEF JAM VENDETTA 2

Currently, the original is far and away the best wrestling game on Gamecube, so you'll no doubt be pleased to hear that there's a sequel in the works. The series, rather than relying on 'characters' from the WWE circuit, uses your favourite hip-hop heroes to lay the smack down. The new roster for the forthcoming games includes the likes of Busta Rhymes, Carmen Electra(?), Lil' Kim, Method Man, Snoop Dogg and Redman. The roster features 35 well-known artists and the overall count of wrestlers weighs in at a phenomenal 70 fighters. EA reckon this is 'the ultimate interactive hip-hop lifestyle product'. We'd be hard-pressed to even name another 'IHHLP' though. Good news, though.



CLASSIC NES SERIES ON ITS WAY

Well, more than likely...



The perfectly emulated, repackaged and rereleased NES classics that we reported on in **NGC**/91 have been selling like hot cakes in Japan. In fact they've been so successful that the US are going to get the same deal, along with a beautiful NES controller-styled GBA SP. Eight NES games will be released initially, including *The Legend of Zelda, Super Mario Bros., Ice Climber, Donkey Kong, Pac-Man* and *Excitebike*. The games will be priced at a lower $19.99 and will feature the original NES box art. The new series (and special edition SP) will be out in the US on the 7th June. Hopefully we'll get a similar deal this Christmas.



△ NES classics in the palm of your hand. Enticing, no?





△ Strategy games have never been so good. Except *Advance Wars*, which is the same, but without the plot.

FIRE EMBLEM FOR GAMECUBE

Handheld strategy gem makes the leap to Gamecube...



The kind of announcement that leaves Geraint slack-jawed and drooling from the side of his damp Welsh mouth, this. Like its predecessors, it's developed by Nintendo developers Intelligent Systems – the same people who gave us *Paper Mario, Mario Kart Super Circuit* and *Advance Wars*.

Fire Emblem: Souen no Kiseki, or *Trial of the Blue Flame* as it translates, is an epic, story-driven strategy RPG that requires you to move units across a battlefield, using their individual strengths to overcome the enemy. It's a pretty much identical system to the one used in *Advance Wars* except on Gamecube it'll feature an isometric 3D view, and, more importantly, has far more in the way of story and cut-scenes.

Both *Advance Wars* and *Fire Emblem* have received 90+% scores for their GBA incarnations, so we're expecting similar results from the GC instalment.

PAPER MARIO RETURNS

CLASSIC N64 MASTERPIECE GETS THE SEQUEL TREATMENT



Just as we were going to press we received this wonderful, *wonderful* news. Yup. *Paper Mario* is definitely getting a sequel – which is a good job, really, as the N64 original (yes, we know there was a Mario RPG on SNES, too) was an absolute cracker of an adventure, boasting a lovely, action and timing-based fighting system, plus a highly amusing storyline that was rife with little Nintendo in-jokes.

Best of all, however, was its distinct graphical style, that saw all the game characters in 2D (paper-thin! See what they did there?) on detailed 3D backgrounds.

This is something that will continue in the sequel – with the flattened Mario, for example, being able to transform himself into a paper aeroplane. Whether or not there'll be any more origami-related powers we have yet to find out, but we wouldn't be surprised.

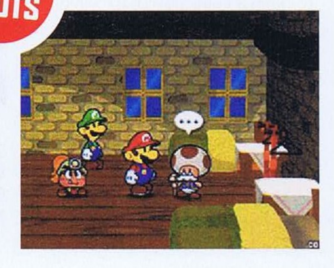
Incidentally, if you never played *Paper Mario* on the N64, Nintendo's GBA Mario-based RPG *Mario and Luigi's Superstar Saga* is a pretty close approximation of the kind of inventive gameplay touches and rib-tickling humour you can expect from this game.





FIRST SHOTS





NEW ONLINE RPG
More news on that quirky Japanese RPG called Homeland that we've been keeping an eye on. The latest development is that it will be online. Players can use their Gamecube as a server, on which up to 30 players can join in the fun. The owner of the Gamecube acting as a server can play as a god (or, rather, a dungeon master) for the the 30 other participants, spawning monsters and leading and directing the quest. Intriguing stuff.



MISSION: SURVIVAL.

The full story of Samus Aran's first mission finally unfolds. Blast your way through the maze-like caverns of planet Zebes and rid the universe of the Metroid menace. Will you be a hero, or zero?

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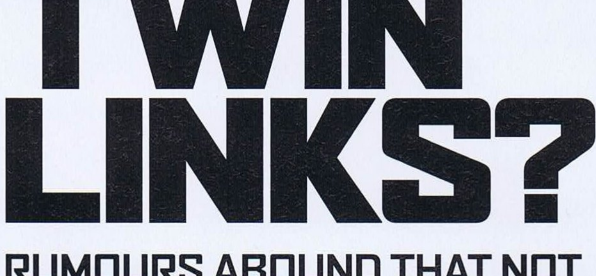
www.nintendo.co.uk

TO BE REVEALED AT E3...

THE GAMES WE PREDICT WILL MAKE AN IMPACT AT THIS YEAR'S SHOW







TWIN LINKS?

RUMOURS ABOUND THAT NOT ONE, BUT TWO BRAND-NEW ZELDA GAMES WILL APPEAR...

At this year's GDC (Game Developers Conference), Eiji Aonuma, director of *Zelda: Wind Waker* and *Majora's Mask*, had this to say about future instalments in the Zelda franchise: "So with this new expressive quality and the upcoming release of the unique Nintendo DS system, I think we'll see more changes coming to the franchises – the likes of which we can talk about at this year's E3 – when we also talk about the development of *Wind Waker 2*.

'Nintendo DS'? *Also* talk of *Wind Waker 2*? Is it just us or does that at the very least allude to a DS Zelda game? That would make people reconsider DS.

So far we know that the game will use the same cel-shaded engine that *Wind Waker* used. Other than that we have no idea what to expect – although knowing Nintendo they're bound to create a very different Zelda to *Wind Waker*. Eiji Aonuma has recently stated that he tries "to establish a new theme that guides gameplay". In the past we've had a light and dark world, time travel, a self-repeating temporal loop and er… wind. What's it going to be this time? Office theories revolve around 'Steam Punk', 'cross-dressing' and 'animal husbandry'. Worrying.

GO! GO! MARIO!

SO INNOVATIVE IT HURTS. APPARENTLY. BUT WILL WE ACTUALLY GET TO SEE IT?



WOOT! Like, *Mario 128* is going to totally R0x0r!11!1! Or so everyone who hasn't seen it would have you believe. While we don't doubt it'll be worthy of the *Mario* name we wonder whether, realistically speaking, we're actually going to see it this side of the year 2043. According to Shigsy (who keeps the game under his pillow at night along with an AK-47 and utility belt stocked with shuriken) the game is so goddamned cutting-edge that people are bound to steal all its ideas if information is leaked before the time is right. So is 'that time' going to be E3 2004? We wouldn't count on it. If only to avoid inevitable disappointment…

PRIMED & READY?

A LOOK AT SAMUS IN VIDEO FORM LAST TIME AROUND. PLAYABLE THIS YEAR?



You can safely file this one under 'definitely'. At least in so far as *Metroid 2's* appearance is concerned.

Obviously we'd love to see this in playable form – and we don't think that's too tall an order. We'd imagine Retro Studios haven't scrapped the original *Prime* engine, instead opting to update and evolve their current technology. In which case they're probably a long way through the game's development by now. A few years ago, we played the opening 'training' level from *Prime*, and we really wouldn't put it past Nintendo to have a similar playable chunk on offer this year.



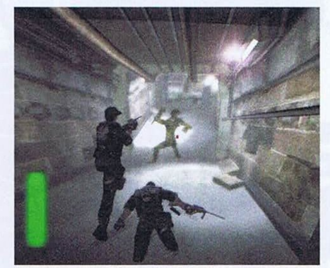
△ Samus taking a pounding in the E3 video footage shown last year. Ooh.

As for what to expect from the game, it's pretty tough to tell. There are obviously suggestions for a sequel in the ending of the previous game (we won't repeat it here and spoil it for you if you haven't finished playing it yet!) so it's feasible that the game picks up from when heroine Samus left Tallon IV.

Whatever happens, this is pretty high on our must-play list.



One of those games that should be nearing completion and so will…



…likely be playable at this year's E3. We hope the multiplayer's tidy.

GHOST WATCH

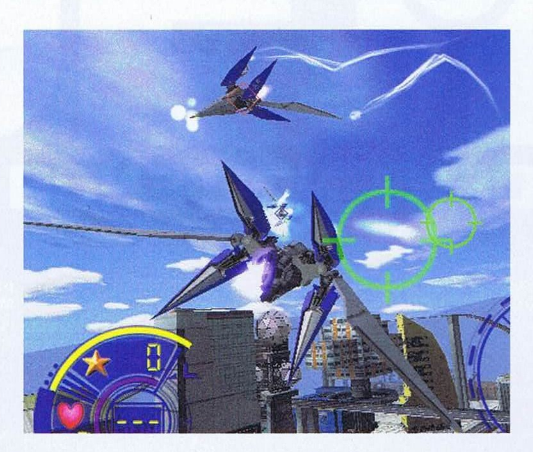
GEIST, NINTENDO'S SPECTRAL FPS, WAFTED OUT OF SIGHT ALMOST AS SOON AS IT ARRIVED

One of last year's surprises, is Geist. Little is known about it other than that in it you play the part of a ghost who haunts a 'compound' of some kind.

You have the ability to possess different characters by scaring them and then taking control of their bodies, bestowing you with different abilities and weapons. You can even access their memories to extract vital information. The game seems to have adventure-like leanings, with players required to solve puzzles as well as fight the more traditional gun battles.

It's developed by N-Space, who have been responsible for some truly awe-inspiring games. Awe-inspiring in the fact they were just awe-ful. (See what we did there?) *Mary-Kate and Ashley, Sweet 16: Licensed to Drive?* Sweet. God. We're hopeful *Geist* will fare better.





ON ARWING AND A PRAYER

STARFOX SHOULD BE MUCH MORE PLAYABLE

Previously known as *Starfox Armada*, Namco and Nintendo's dogfighting collaboration has since reverted to *Starfox 2*. The last time we got to play *Starfox* was at E3 2003, and while it showed promise it was all pretty raw-looking with worryingly fiddly controls. It was early days, though, and we'd imagine that things have come on leaps and bounds since then. The format of the game last time was strictly multiplayer-based, being a series of arenas where four players were pitted against each other as they raced around picking up power-ups and commandeering vehicles like the Arwing and Landmaster Tank.

This year we're desperately hoping that Namco have added a 'classic' single-player shooter, as it's this that we (and countless other we'd imagine) really want to see. Again, this is certain to be on show.



SHORT CUTS



NINTY AND THE POWER OF KUJU

Kuju – the UK developer responsible for *Fire Warrior, Firestorm* and er… *Reign of Fire* – have entered into an agreement with Nintendo to develop a GC-exclusive title. We have absolutely no idea what it's going to be, but we're confident it'll revolve around the theme of 'fire'. Whether it will be a game based on an existing Nintendo franchise remains to be seen, but our money's on an all-new title. Maybe we'll hear more details at E3.



STOP PRESS! NEW US LIST

Erk! As this issue went to press, we received a new US release schedule. These dates replace those on page 15.

May 10
Custom Robo

June 7
Zelda: Four Swords

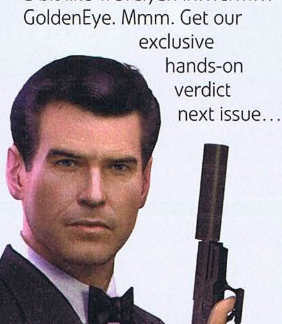
August
Pikmin 2

September
Donkey Konga

Q4 2004
Geist
Mario Party 6
Mario Tennis
Metroid Prime2
Paper Mario 2
Starfox 2

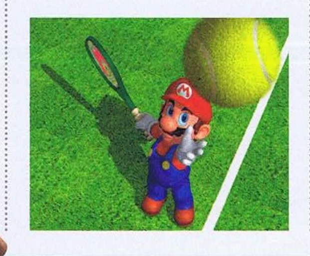
KEEPING AN EYE OUT

GoldenEye 2. We'd be lying if we said we weren't concerned about the quality of the end result. This game will put you in charge of a 00 agent gone bad, a bit like Trevelyan in…erm… GoldenEye. Mmm. Get our exclusive hands-on verdict next issue…



NEW BALLS PLEASE…

Mario Tennis. *Surely. We saw early shots around 256B.C. You'd think Nintendo would have something to show us by now, what with summer approaching and all. We were huge huge fans of the delightfully addictive N64 game, and the chance to spend all day playing this would cheer us up no end. Come on Nintendo. You know you want to…*





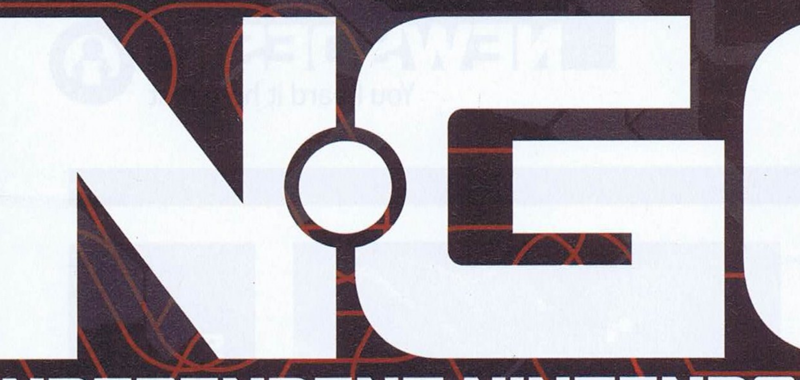
KILLER 7

The last of Capcom's 'Big Five' to be made playable to us. While we've seen plenty of screens and videos, we've yet to get our hands on it, so we're very intrigued to find out how it all hangs together. All we know is that it features a blend of third- and first-person shooting action along with an often ludicrous level of stylised violence.

ANIMAL CROSSING 2



We know for fact that this is in the works. It's one of gaming's biggest tragedies that it never made it over here. Hopefully the second instalment won't suffer the same fate. As for whether we'll actually see it – well, the first game got unveiled a couple of years back, so we'd be surprised if we didn't at least hear some kind of announcement.



Official Mobile Conten



INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING

Java Games



PHONE MODEL	GAME CODE
Nokia 3100	NGGG 8594
Nokia 3300	NGGG 8291
Nokia 6100	NGGG 1569
Nokia 6610	NGGG 8821
Nokia 6800	NGGG 3801
Nokia 7210	NGGG 6958
Nokia 7250	NGGG 4522
Nokia 3510i	NGGG 4050
Nokia 5100	NGGG 8332

Nightmare™ Creatures
ime to face your worst nightmare!
Category: Beat'em All

PHONE MODEL	GAME CODE
Nokia 3100	NGGG 2431
Nokia 3300	NGGG 2112
Nokia 3510i	NGGG 2953
Nokia 3650	NGGG 2331
Nokia 5100	NGGG 3410
Nokia 6100	NGGG 4183
Nokia 6610	NGGG 8415
Nokia 7210	NGGG 4041
Nokia 7250	NGGG 9985
Nokia 7650	NGGG 3562
Nokia N-Gage	NGGG 4068
Sagem My V-65	NGGG 2948
Sharp GX-10	NGGG 6384
Sharp GX-20	NGGG 2009

XIII
Will you penetrate the mystery?
Category: Action / Shooter

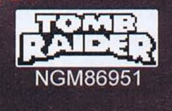
PHONE MODEL	GAME CODE
Nokia 3100	NGGG 93
Nokia 3300	NGGG 28
Nokia 3410	NGGG 13
Nokia 3510i	NGGG 81
Nokia 3650	NGGG 74
Nokia 5100	NGGG 115
Nokia 6100	NGGG 88
Nokia 6610	NGGG 19
Nokia 6800	NGGG 58
Nokia 7210	NGGG 69
Nokia 7250	NGGG 41
Nokia 7650	NGGG 89
Nokia N-Gage	NGGG 92
Sharp GX10	NGGG 88
Siemans M50	NGGG 73
Siemans M55	NGGG 13
Siemans S55	NGGG 62

Planet Zero™
A handful of chaos!
Category: Shoot

Picture Messages



NGM86953


NGM86952



NGM86951


NGM86950



NGM86645



NGM86640


NGM86639


NGM86634




NGM86

Logos




NGM26800


NGM26801



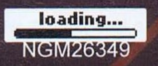
NGM26802



NGM26349



NGM26347



NGM26339


NGM26338


NGM26334







NGM268

Ringtones & Real Sound Tones

CHART TONES OLD AND NEW

its

		Poly	Mono
ack Eyed Peas	Where Is The Love	NGP 79667	NGM 45200
eyonce Knowles	Crazy In Love	NGP 79237	NGM 45201
ean Paul	Get Busy	NGP 79019	NGM 45202
J Sammy & Yanou	Feat Do Heaven	NGP 76994	NGM 45203
anescence	Bring Me To Life	NGP 79119	NGM 45204
oldplay	Clocks	NGP 78160	NGM 45205
hite Stripes	Seven Nation Army	NGP 78921	NGM 45206
u Cantrell	Breathe	NGP 79290	NGM 45207
asement Jaxx	Lucky Star	NGP 76922	NGM 45208
eyonce	Me,Myself+I	NGP 76946	NGM 45209
ylie	Slow	NGP 75079	NGM 45210

ip Hop

		Poly	Mono
bie Trice	Got Some Teeth	NGP 74137	NGM 45211
Kelly	Ignition	NGP 79043	NGM 45212
y Z+Pharrell	Excuse Me Miss	NGP 79011	NGM 45213
usta+Mariah	I Know What You Want	NGP 79117	NGM 45214
MX	Where the Hood at	NGP 72774	NGM 45215
0 Cent	PIMP	NGP 70566	NGM 45216
0 Cent	In Da Club	NGP 77949	NGM 45217
minem	Cleaning Out My Closet	NGP 76327	NGM 45218
uff Daddy	Missing U	NGP 77638	NGM 45219
minem	Lose Yourself	NGP 77915	NGM 45220
0 Cent	21 Questions	NGP 79236	NGM 45221
minem	Without Me	NGP 75782	NGM 45222
MX	X Gonna Give it to Ya	NGP 79012	NGM 45223

ock

		Poly	Mono
he Darkness	I Believe In A Thing Called Love	NGP 79744	NGM 45224
CDC	For Those About To Rock	NGP 77763	NGM 45225
otorhead	Ace of Spades	NGP 77103	NGM 45226
erosmith	Walk This Way	NGP 79066	NGM 45227
urope	Final Countdown	NGP 75655	NGM 45228
tone Roses	Fools Gold	NGP 70917	NGM 45229
uns N Roses	Sweet Child o Mine	NGP 72161	NGM 45230
ed Zeppelin	Kashmir	NGP 79267	NGM 45231
eat Loaf	Bat Out of Hell	NGP 70630	NGM 45232
an Halen	Jump	NGP 75137	NGM 45233
on Maiden	Rain Maker	NGP 76948	NGM 45234
eatles	Hey Jude	NGP 70022	NGM 45235
ack Sabbath	Paranoid	NGP 77099	NGM 45236

ance

		Poly	Mono
TM	Fly on the Wings of Love	NGP 79164	NGM 45237
hangra Knights	Husan	NGP 79039	NGM 45238
D Project	Summer Jam	NGP 72358	NGM 45239
enni Bennassi	Satisfaction	NGP 79255	NGM 45240
ove Inc	You're A Superstar	NGP 77432	NGM 45241
anga Kru	Super Sharp Shooter	NGP 72859	NGM 45242
imeson	Complete	NGP 79746	NGM 45243
mcraft	Loneliness	NGP 78802	NGM 45244
trabeat	Pretty Green Eyes	NGP 79790	NGM 45245
ylie	Can't Get You Out of my Head	NGP 74005	NGM 45246

Classic Game Tones

Classic Games	Poly
Batman Returns	NGP 77129
Castlevania 4	NGP 77509
Desert Strike	NGP 77740
Donkey Kong Country	NGP 77751
Final Fantasy 7	NGP 77887
Killer Instincts	NGP 78368
Mega Man X	NGP 77936
Ridge Racer	NGP 77972
Sim City	NGP 78298
Sonic The Hedgehog	NGP 78233
Street Fighter	NGP 78317
Super Mario Cart	NGP 77913
Super Mario World	NGP 78293
Tekken 2	NGP 78373
Zelda - A Link To The Past	NGP 77910
Worms 3D	NGP 71691
Total Club Manager 2004 version 2	NGP 71689
Total Club Manager 2004 version 1	NGP 71688
Tiger woods PGA Tour 2004 Version 1	NGP 71687
Pro Evolution Soccer 2 Version 1	NGP 71686
Pro Evolution Soccer 2	NGP 71685
Grand Theft Auto	NGP 71683
Getaway	NGP 71682
Fifa Football 2004 Version 3	NGP 71680
Fifa Football 2004 Version 2	NGP 71643
Fifa Football 2004 Version 1	NGP 71641

REAL SOUND TONES	Poly
Pig Snort	NGP 79184
Monkey	NGP 79181
Machine Gun	NGP 78687
Heavy Machine Gun	NGP 78675
Fart	NGP 72718
Long Fart	NGP 79880
Bruce Lee Fighting	NGP 79205
Gargle	NGP 72982
Punch	NGP 79359
Burp	NGP 79879

TONE MADNESS

TV	Poly	Mono
Only Fools + Horses	NGP 70117	NGM 45247
Muppets Mahna Mahna	NGP 78378	NGM 45248
Miami Vice	NGP 76079	NGM 45249
Professionals	NGP 70119	NGM 45250
Starsky+Hutch	NGP 76868	NGM 45251
Minder	NGP 70752	NGM 45252
Danger Mouse	NGP 76368	NGM 45253
Steptoe+Son	NGP 70582	NGM 45254
Scooby Doo	NGP 70123	NGM 45255
Top Cat	NGP 70380	NGM 45256
Simpsons	NGP 70441	NGM 45257
A-Team	NGP 76230	NGM 45258
Muppet Show	NGP 70114	NGM 45259
Match Of The Day	NGP 70255	NGM 45260
Banana Splits	NGP 76355	NGM 45261

Movies	Poly	Mo
Great Escape	NGP 70092	NGM
James Bond	NGP 70340	NGM
Rocky	NGP 70561	NGM
Godfather	NGP 70291	NGM
Exorcist	NGP 70284	NGM
Halloween	NGP 75961	NGM
Bev Hills Cop	NGP 77032	NGM
Ghostbusters	NGP 70089	NGM
Deliverance	NGP 70711	NGM
Matrix	NGP 75713	NGM
Mission Imp	NGP 70111	NGM



How To Order

(All products are available on selected phones please check Terms and conditions for compatibil

abc
NGP76355
Nokia
OPTIONS CLEAR

Just Text The Code

SELECT NUMBER
84600
OK CLEAR

Send It To 84600



Once Its Delivered Save It To Your Phon

To order a mono tone or Java game text the item code to 84600 Eg. Text **NGM45251** to **84600**

To order a Real sound tone or Polyphonic tone text the item code followed by your phone manufacturer to 84600. Eg. TEXT **NGP76355 NOKIA** to **84600**

To Order by Phone : 0906 4062696 - Call for Polys & Real Sounds ONLY! Calls cost £1.50 per min for 3 mins

Screensaver



NGP50003

DISAGREE WITH MOST WANTED? Then email us at **ngc@futurenet.co.uk** or write to us at **NGC**, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW and tell us the three games you're most looking forward to. Every month, we'll tally up the scores on the doors and change the list accordingly.



Adding up the scores and accounting for taste, that's what this page does.



1 NINTENDO DS

UK 2004 | US 2004 | JAPAN 2004

Thrilling possibilities for Nintendo's next-gen handheld emerged this month, thanks to the leaked Nitro document (see page 16). The fact that Sony seem to have gone comparatively quiet about their own handheld (presumably because it's not going to hit Europe or the US this year) seems to have caused the cynics to adopt a fresh view of Nintendo DS. Like you, we're upbeat about the system.

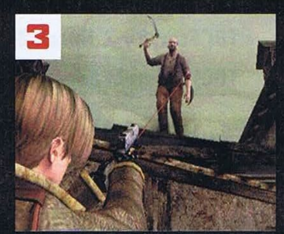


! POKÉMON COLOSSEUM

UK 14 MAY | US OUT NOW | JAPAN OUT NOW

No doubt you've already turned to our exhaustive review. Did you notice that we're also giving you the chance to get £5 off it?

SEE PAGE 42



3 RESIDENT EVIL 4

UK 2005 | US 15 NOV | JAPAN TBC

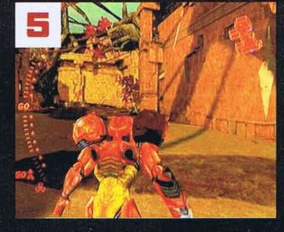
A Gamecube-exclusive *Resi* that's so fresh and exciting, even PlayStation 2 magazines are printing screenshots. Chances are, it might make an appearance on PS3 or something, but you'll need a Gamecube to play it NOW. Or… well… in 2005. Early 2005, mind. Mmm.



4 LEGEND OF ZELDA WIND WAKER 2

UK TBC | US TBC | JAPAN TBC

Despite *Mario 128* seemingly disappearing off the face of the planet (you watch it appear on N5…), the sequel to *Wind Waker* will be shown to the world in May.



5 METROID PRIME 2

UK TBC | US TBC | JAPAN TBC

We expect to be able to get a go on a playable version of *Prime's* sequel in a few weeks. Retro Studios are currently advertising for a Level Designer and World Artist (both six-month contracts), so we anticipate the game not appearing until November-ish at least.



6 ZELDA FOUR SWORDS+

UK TBC | US TBC | JAPAN OUT NOW

More GBA/GC link-up insanity from Nintendo. The UK release date is still to be confirmed, but we're playing the Japanese code right now. See Kittsy take it apart from page 58…



7 GOLDENEYE 2

UK XMAS | US XMAS | JAPAN TBC

We revealed the first development details of EA's 'successor' to the legendary N64 game last issue. Already it's debuted at number 7 in your Most Wanted chart. We're sure the mighty Arts will listen to the suggestions we made in our open letter to them…



8 STARFOX 2

UK TBC | US 15 JUN | JAPAN TBC

Still pencilled in for a June release in the States, but we doubt it'll hit that. There's been scat-all info and new shots released since its appearance at last year's E3, but it'll be there again this year, hopefully in a much tighter, near-finished incarnation.



9 KILLER 7

UK 2005 | US 15 OCT | JAPAN TBC

Word of a mid-October US release means import-savvy Gamecube owners are keeping Capcom's bloody cartoon in our top ten. It's nasty all right – gutloads of blood, a sinister backstory and dark third-person action blended with first-person gun death. What a treat!



10 MARIO TENNIS – Rumour is 'it'll be at E3'. Yes.
UK TBC | US TBC | JAPAN TBC

11 TIMESPLITTERS 3 – 'Split's the dogs! Sorry.
UK 2005 | US 2005 | JAPAN TBC

12 MARIO GOLF – A good walk-sim ruined?
UK 18 JUN | US OUT NOW | JAPAN OUT NOW

13 DONKEY KONGA – He 'wanna be like you'. Okay?
UK TBC | US TBC | JAPAN OUT NOW

14 CUSTOM ROBO – Build 'em, fight 'em, fry 'em.
UK TBC | US 10 MAY | JAPAN OUT NOW

15 STARCRAFT: GHOST – The best kind of Starcraft.
UK TBC | US TBC | JAPAN TBC

16 PIKMIN 2 – The 'Min love being at No. 16.
UK TBC | US TBC | JAPAN 29 APR

17 SECOND SIGHT – We didn't see this coming…
UK TBC | US TBC | JAPAN TBC

18 VIEWTIFUL JOE 2 – Not even announced yet. Sssh.
UK TBC | US TBC | JAPAN TBC

19 SPIDER-MAN 2 – Return of the man-spider.
UK 9 JUL | US 28 JUN | JAPAN TBC

20 TALES OF SYMPHONIA – Aaiiiieee..! Dropped like a dog.
UK TBC | US JULY | JAPAN OUT NOW

21 GEIST – One of this year's E3 biggies?
UK TBC | US TBC | JAPAN TBC

22 SPLINTER CELL: PT – Tom Clancy's favourite.
UK TBC | US JUNE | JAPAN TBC

23 THE MOVIES – Hollywood comes home. To GC.
UK 2005 | US TBC | JAPAN TBC

24 PSO III C.A.R.D. – Losing… its… grip…
UK JUNE | US OUT NOW | JAPAN OUT NOW

25 UNITY – Your 25th most wanted game.
UK TBC | US TBC | JAPAN TBC

WRITE TO… MAILBOX/NGC/30 MONMOUTH STREET/BATH/BA1 2BW OR EMAIL NGC@FUTURENET.CO.UK

ULTRA RELEASE LIST

The latest on every Nintendo system game in development – updated monthly!

UK RELEASES

The most accurate listing available – although be aware that slippages can occur. All titles Gamecube unless otherwise stated.

APRIL

23 **Digimon Racing (GBA)** Atari
30 **Metroid: Zero Mission (GBA)** Nintendo
30 **Robocop (GBA)** Avalon
TBC **Goblin Commander: Unleash the Horde** Jaleco
TBC **Shining Force: Resurrection of the Dark Dragon (GBA)** Sega/THQ
TBC **World Championship Pool 2004** Jaleco

MAY

14 **Pokémon Colosseum** Nintendo
TBC **Boktai (GBA)** Konami
TBC **Serious Sam: Next Encounter** Take 2
TBC **Serious Sam Advance (GBA)** Take 2

JUNE

4 **Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban** EA
4 **Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban (GBA)** EA
18 **Mario Golf: Toadstool Tour** Nintendo
18 **Mario Golf: Advance Tour (GBA)** Nintendo
18 **Shrek 2** Activision
18 **Shrek 2 (GBA)** Activision
25 **Asterix & Obelix XXL** Atari
25 **Asterix & Obelix XXL (GBA)** Atari
25 **Crash Bandicoot: Fusion (GBA)** Vivendi
25 **Donkey Kong Country 2 (GBA)** Nintendo
25 **Spyro: Fusion (GBA)** Vivendi
TBC **Phantasy Star Online Episode III: C.A.R.D.** Sega
TBC **Samurai Jack** Sega

JULY

9 **Spider-Man The Movie 2** Activision
9 **Spider-Man The Movie 2 (GBA)** Activision
30 **Catwoman** EA
30 **Catwoman (GBA)** EA

SEPTEMBER

TBC **Mega Man Battle Network 4 (GBA)** Capcom
TBC **Starcraft: Ghost** Vivendi

OCTOBER

TBC **Shark Tale** Activision
TBC **Shark Tale (GBA)** Activision
TBC **Starsky & Hutch 2** Empire
TBC **X-Men Legends** Activision

AUTUMN 2004

Mega Man X Command Mission Capcom
WWE Day of Reckoning THQ

WINTER 2004

GoldenEye 2 EA
The Incredibles THQ
The Incredibles (GBA) THQ

TBC 2004

Animal Crossing 2 Nintendo
Baten Kaitos Namco
Call of Duty: Finest Hour Activision
Custom Robo Nintendo
Custom Robo GX (GBA) Nintendo
Def Jam Vendetta 2 EA
Donkey Konga Nintendo
Extreme Force Namco
Fantastic Four Activision
FIFA 2005 EA
Fire Emblem (GBA) Nintendo
F-Zero: Legend of Falcon (GBA) Nintendo
Game Zero (Working Title) Zoo
Geist Nintendo
Good Cop Bad Cop Revolution
Good Cop Bad Cop (GBA) Revolution
Hamtaro: Rainbow Rescue (GBA) Nintendo
Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events Activision
Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events (GBA) Activision
Madden NFL 2005 EA
Mario Tennis Nintendo
Mario Tennis (GBA) Nintendo
Masters of the Universe He-Man: Defender of Grayskull TDK/Take2
Metroid Prime 2 Nintendo
Mario vs Donkey Kong (GBA) Nintendo
Muppets Party Cruise TDK/Take 2
NBA Live 2005 EA
NHL 2005 EA
Nightmare Creatures 3 Nintendo
Nintendo Puzzle Collection Nintendo
Paper Mario Nintendo
Pikmin 2 Nintendo
Rainbow Six 3 Ubi Soft
Robocop Avalon
Scary Tales Wanadoo
Second Sight Free Radical
Shaman King Konami
Sonic Advance 3 (GBA) Sega/THQ
Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow Ubi Soft
Starfox 2 Nintendo
Super Collapse! II (GBA) Majesco
Super Mario 128 Nintendo
Tales of Symphonia Namco
Terminator 3: The Redemption Atari
Unity Lionhead
Virtua Fighter Cyber Generation Sega
Wario Ware Inc. Nintendo
Yu-Gi-Oh! Falsebound Kingdom Konami
The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker 2 Nintendo
The Legend of Zelda: Four Swords + Nintendo

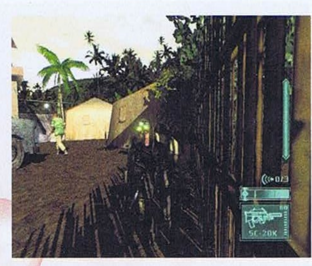
TBC 2005

The Godfather EA
Killer 7 Capcom
Resident Evil 4 Capcom
The Movies Activision
TimeSplitters 3 EA

US RELEASES

The most important US releases to import...





MAY

10	Custom Robo	Nintendo
10	Shrek 2	Activision
11	Mega Man Anniversary Collection	Capcom
24	Mario vs Donkey Kong (GBA)	Nintendo
TBC	Donkey Konga	Nintendo

JUNE

7	Star Fox 2	Nintendo
15	The Legend of Zelda: Four Swords Adventures	Nintendo
28	Mario Golf: Advance Tour (GBA)	Nintendo
28	Spider-Man 2	Activision
TBC	Astro Boy: Omega Factor (GBA)	Sega

JULY

13	Tales of Symphonia	Namco
15	Donkey Konga	Nintendo
15	Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow	Ubi Soft

AUGUST

2	Madden NFL 2005	EA
2	Metal Slug Advance (GBA)	SNK

SEPTEMBER

TBC	WWE Day of Reckoning	THQ

OCTOBER

15	Killer 7	Capcom

NOVEMBER

15	Resident Evil 4	Capcom

JAP RELEASES

Big name Japanese future hits.





APRIL

22	Mario Golf: GBA Tour (GBA)	Nintendo
23	Pia Carrot e Youkoso!! 3.3 (GBA)	NEC
23	Rockman Zero 3 (GBA)	Capcom
23	Shiren Monsters: Netsal (GBA)	ChunSoft
23	Uchuu no Stellvia (GBA)	King Records
29	Mickey to Pocket Resort (GBA)	Tomy
29	Pyuu to Fuku! Jogger Byuu to Deru! Megane-Kun (GBA)	Konami
29	Pikmin 2	Nintendo
29	Zero One SP (GBA)	Fuuki

JUNE

26	Harry Potter to Azkaban no Shuujin	EA

WINTER 2004

BioHazard 4	Capcom
Killer 7	Capcom

TBC 2004

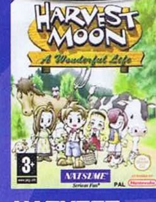
Mario vs Donkey Kong (GBA)	Nintendo
Mario Tennis	Nintendo
Metroid Prime 2	Nintendo
Starfox 2	Nintendo/Namco
Virtua Fighter Cyber Generation: Judgement	
Six No Yabou	Sega

THESE JUST OUT!

Missed last issue? Here's NGC's pick of the freshest games around...



METAL GEAR SOLID: THE TWIN SNAKES
NGC/91 ■ 90%
There weren't many great games last issue – but this is still hot.



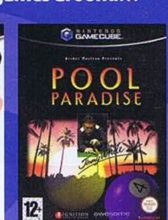
HARVEST MOON: A WONDERFUL LIFE
NGC/91 ■ 91%
Not edge-of-the-seat-exciting, but endlessly absorbing farm-sim.







FINAL FANTASY CRYSTAL CHRONICLES
NGC/91 ■ 86%
Expensive (if you're going to play it as it was intended).



POOL PARADISE
NGC/92 ■ 80%
Gamecube's first billiards sim, in which the 'action' all takes place on a tropical island. Good fun.



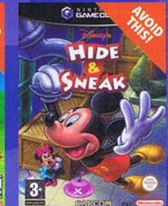
GOBLIN COMMANDER: UNLEASH THE HORDE
NGC/92 ■ 72%
A lightweight, but fun, RTS. Shame about the looks and lifespan.



TAK AND THE POWER OF JUJU
NGC/92 ■ 69%
Platform adventure thing that ticks all the right boxes, but is never truly exciting.



POKÉMON CHANNEL
NGC/92 ■ 24%
A 'game' where you channel hop through a dismal selection of Pokémon 'toons. For masochists only.



DISNEY'S HIDE & SNEAK
NGC/92 ■ 25%
Mickey Mouse does stealth in a slow, repetitive, boring stylee. Absolute pap.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

Where we attempt to clear up those titles that have slipped, gone AWOL or just seem to be sitting there...



SPLINTER CELL: PANDORA TOMORROW
The Gamecube version of the new *Splinter Cell*, along with the PlayStation 2 one, has *just* made an appearance on Ubi Soft's UK release schedule – as a 'TBC. Erk! Both the GBA and Xbox versions are out now – and the PC game only came out this month. We reckon the PS2 version will be out in June, with GC *Pandora* following in July. Well, July-*ish*.



WARIO WARE INC.
It's been out in the US for several weeks – but Nintendo Europe have yet to confirm it's coming out here.

RAINBOW SIX 3
Kind of sneaked onto the release schedule. It should be out by the end of the year – we expect an E3 debut.



PSO EPISODE III: C.A.R.D.
Out in the US and Japan right now – and we've had a tentative 'early June' UK release date from Sega.





BOKTAI
Konami's solar-powered GBA title's slipped from November 2003, to March and now May. And still no hint of review code...

NINTENDO DS WATCH

Another month, another pile of goofy rumours. This is the only place that serves up the most reliable DS info month-in, month-out…

The biggest news this month is that Nintendo DS (temporary name) used to be known as 'Nitro' (working title). Nintendo of America recently sent developers an email confirming that that the system is 'Due to release this Fall', and allocated space to 'Nitro Development' on their restricted access warioworld.com Software Development Support Group site. This was then hastily changed to 'Nintendo DS' a short time later.

Not that gripping in its own right, but this full-fat fact also coincided with the 'leaking' of a Project Nitro working document. This details the specifications for the machine – although these have yet to be corroborated by Nintendo themselves – and we've printed the info for you below. Again, this document has yet to receive any comment from Nintendo (and it won't either, as the company doesn't comment on speculation). Still, these are highly believable specs. In short, Nitro/DS, it seems, will be more powerful than a van-load of electric monkeys. It might not be quite as grunty as PSP in some areas, but how much is Sony's system going to cost? And what will the battery life be? Two prime concerns for anyone considering buying a next-gen handheld.

With Nintendo DS looking to pack an impressive 3D graphics engine, a 'touch panel' and wireless technology, as well as the gameplay-expanding features twin screen technology delivers in its own right, it's certainly the more innovative of the two. It's going to be the system that has more to offer developers and gamers than we ever imagined.

CPU CORE

You can see that the document confirms that DS – or rather 'Nitro' – features both an ARM 9 main processor (running at 67 MHz) and an ARM 7 sub-processor (running at 33 MHz). Industry rumours indicate that as well as being used for new DS titles, the ARM 7 cell will enable backwards compatibility with GBA titles.

SOUND

You can probably see for yourself that it'll offer 16-channel ADPCM/PCM (with a maximum of eight channels of PSG). Which sounds impressive. Let's hope there's a headphone jack included in the bundle too. And from leftfield we have 'Microphone Input' listed as a feature. Microphone input? This is insania! You're on the Underground heading into work. You're on a plane to Zakynthos. You're in the waiting room of your GP. And you're shouting "Jump!" "Run!" "Butt-slam!" at your new DS. Yes, we can see it now… you'll look a prize plum.

MEMORY

Key here is that DS boasts 4MB of system RAM, with the ARM 9 and ARM 7 cells sharing an extra 32KB of RAM, and the system supplied with 656KB of VRAM (which allows for enhanced graphics performance). When it was launched, the standalone N64 only had 4MB of system memory.

NITROの機能概要

CPU コア	
メインプロセッサ	ARM946E-S (67MHz)
サブプロセッサ	ARM7TDMI (33MHz)
メモリ	
メインメモリ	4Mbyte (デバッガ用は 8Mbyte)
ARM9/ARM7 共用	32KByte(16KByte×2)
ARM7 専用内部ワーク RAM	64KByte
VRAM	656KByte
LCD	
表示サイズ	256×192 × RGB ドット × 2面
表示色数	262,144 色(R:G:B=6:6:6)
2D グラフィックエンジン(A,B)	
BG	最大 4 面
OBJ	最大 128 個
3D グラフィックエンジン	
座標変換能力	最大 4M 頂点/秒
ポリゴン描画能力	最大 120K ポリゴン/秒
ピクセル描画能力	最大 30M ピクセル/秒
サウンド	16ch ADPCM/PCM(最大 8ch を PSG に設定可能) マイク入力
ワイヤレス通信	IEEE802.11 ベース独自プロトコル
入力デバイス	タッチパネル 十字キー、A、B、R、L、START、SELECT (X,Y は検討中)
電力制御	スリープモードに対応 (決まった時間や、無線受信による WakeUp が可能)。2D エンジン,レンダリングエンジン、ジオメトリエンジン、LCD の電力制御が可能

CONFIDENTIAL

Nintendo

WIRELESS COMMUNICATION

'Original protocol based on IEEE802.11,' it says here. Frightening stuff, no? Essentially it's the industry standard for wireless networking, which means you'll be able to connect Nintendo DS systems through the cool air – straight out of the box. In fact, you'll be able to connect 16 of them, if the rumours are to be believed. It's a relatively fast system which is likely to be restricted to short distances to preserve battery life (we anticipate a maximum range of around 10 metres), although the potential distance is much greater. Just imagine a game of *Mario Kart* against 15 of your friends, each with two screens pumping out the shell-squitting joy.

LCD

The two screens will have 256x192 resolution (beating the 240x160 pixel count of the current Game Boy Advance screen – just) and support 262,144 colours (compared to GBA's 32,768 possible colours). This will rock your eyes! Dude.

2D GRAPHICS ENGINE

DS will support up to four scrolling backgrounds and a maximum of 128 sprites/on-screen objects. So the 2D abilities of DS are similar to those of the GBA.

INPUT DEVICE

Here it's confirmed that the system'll share similar controls to GBA, with a D-pad and regular A and B buttons, plus Left and Right shoulders. The addition of X and Y buttons (similar to **NGC**'s interpretation of DS) appears to be 'under examination'. More interestingly, the system will also pack a 'touch-panel' – so at least one of the screens could be touch-sensitive. Or there could be a separate laptop-style 'mouse pad' – possibly with a stylus. Boingzoi!

POWER SAVE

DS will feature a Sleep mode, with WakeUp being triggered at a chosen time or by wireless reception (hinting that maybe someone a distance away from you could possibly challenge you to a game…). There are also power save features for the 2D engine, rendering engine, geometry engine and LCD screen. The big issue with any new portable system is battery life. With the additional features of twin screens, twin processors, wireless connectivity and more, it's certainly going to be an intense workout for DS's likely rechargable battery.

3D GRAPHICS ENGINE

This is where DS is streaks ahead of GBA, with a real focus on 3D gaming. The system will be able to shunt around a maximum of 120,000 polygons a second, with a pixel fill rate of 30 million per second. To put that in context, the benchmark performance of N64 was 100,000 polygons per second with all the hardware graphic features switched on.

SUPER MARIO DS?



It's rumoured that a two-level DS demo of *Super Mario 64* is being sent out with all development models of the Dual Screen system. This doesn't surprise us – most expect key N64 titles to migrate to the new handheld. What does intrigue us is how the controls work. We've adjusted our interpretation of DS according to the Nitro document – replacing the analogue stick with a D-pad. But how will this work with a 3D game-world? Touch-panel technology could possibly help here…

IT'S NOT JUST A GAMES MACHINE…

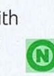
Last issue we revealed that 'industry analyst' PJ McNealy of American Technology Research had seen two hours of video playback running on DS. This month he's been at it again, reporting that Nintendo DS will feature an Instant Messaging service.

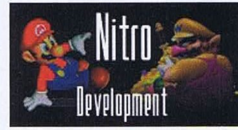
The idea seems to be that you'd type your message on the 'touch panel' and then be able to send it, via the system's wireless feature, to anyone within reception distance. While it might seem at odds with Nintendo's opinion of 'do everything' multimedia devices, the fact is that the recent Japanese release of Pokémon Fire Red/Leaf Green saw the games make use of a 'chat' feature using the GBA Wireless Adaptor.

The latest rumour is that Sony have dropped the wireless feature from PSP, giving Nintendo's system yet another unique quality (and future proofing it into the bargain – it's likely that DS will work in tandem with the successor to Gamecube). We're sure Sony will be taking a great deal of interest in how DS's wireless capabilities are received at this year's E3…!

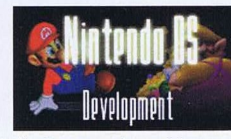
NITRO BOOST?

Nintendo Nitro. Not quite as an appealing code name as 'Project Reality/Ultra 64' (the working titles for Nintendo 64) or 'Dolphin' (Gamecube), is it? Some observers began to get a little confused when the Nitro document leaked, surmising that it would in fact be the final name for the system. Whatever it ends up being called, it needs to be far enough removed from 'Game Boy Advance' so as not to confuse 'mainstream' gamers. It's certainly going to be a struggle for Nintendo to get across the message that this is their 'third pillar' and not, in fact, GBA 2 – particularly if they insist on making it backwards compatible with current GBA software, as some rumours suggest.





△ Nintendo's original link on their development site.



△ Go to warioworld.com and this is what you see now.

More next month…



WHAT'S TRAPPENING?

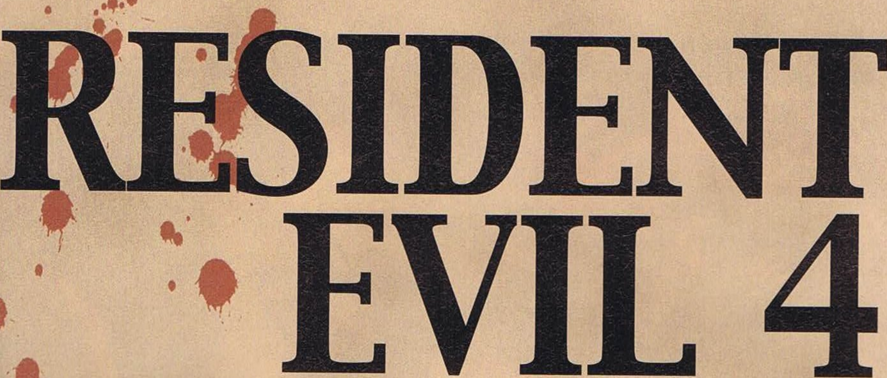
The woods are riddled with traps. While some might be for hunting, the explosive ones suggest something more sinister.

■ Obstructing Leon's route through the trees are these trip wires hooked up to a slab of explosives. Disarm them by shooting the explosives from a distance.

■ Leon discovers a dog caught up in one of these traps. He has the option to release it or walk on by, a decision that may affect later events.

■ The traps are too sophisticated to be the work of the villagers, so just who is responsible? Umbrella? Wesker? The Countryside Alliance?





RESIDENT EVIL 4

NGC WENT DOWN TO THE WOODS EXPECTING A BIG SURPRISE, BUT WE NEVER SAW THIS COMING.

Many of us are Resi fans here but, let's be honest, by the end of *Zero* the series was looking weary. Fighting against an evil mega-company that specialised in turning humans into flesh-eating monsters was still a good thing. Being asked if we 'wanted to take the shotgun shells', however, was beginning to grate. Now it's time for Capcom to get slicker and for the Evil to get its bite back.

At a press event in Las Vegas we not only saw an explosive video of *Resident Evil 4* courtesy of Shinji Mikami, we also became the only UK Nintendo mag to go hands-on with the game. Only we know just why every Gamecube owner should be celebrating the return of Resi to GC.

this *Resident Evil*, which has never been big on hugs, this is new Resi and we don't know the rules.

What is familiar is the hero, Leon S Kennedy. The floppy fringe remains but the police body armour has gone; now it's utility chic and a fleece-lined flight jacket. Since dragging himself from the carnage of *Resi 2* he's joined the Secret Service and is investigating the abduction of the US President's daughter, which leads him to these woods, deep in an unnamed European country.

The strange thing is, we can't see Leon's face. Not because it's been torn off, but because we're controlling him from a third-person perspective that's tight on Leon's back, enabling us to look and move in any direction. Rather than controlling the hero like a remote controlled car from the point

We're controlling Leon from a third-person perspective, enabling us to move in any direction

Picking up the pad we re-entered the world of survival horror in a forest with a muesli-shaded leaf floor, faded grass and trees. It's daylight, there are no mansions hiding terrors, no police stations offering false refuge and no shifting shapes behind fractured windows. Apart from the fog clouding the middle distance, you can see everything. Rationally, there's nothing to be afraid of – it's a wood. But the menace is still there, as not only is

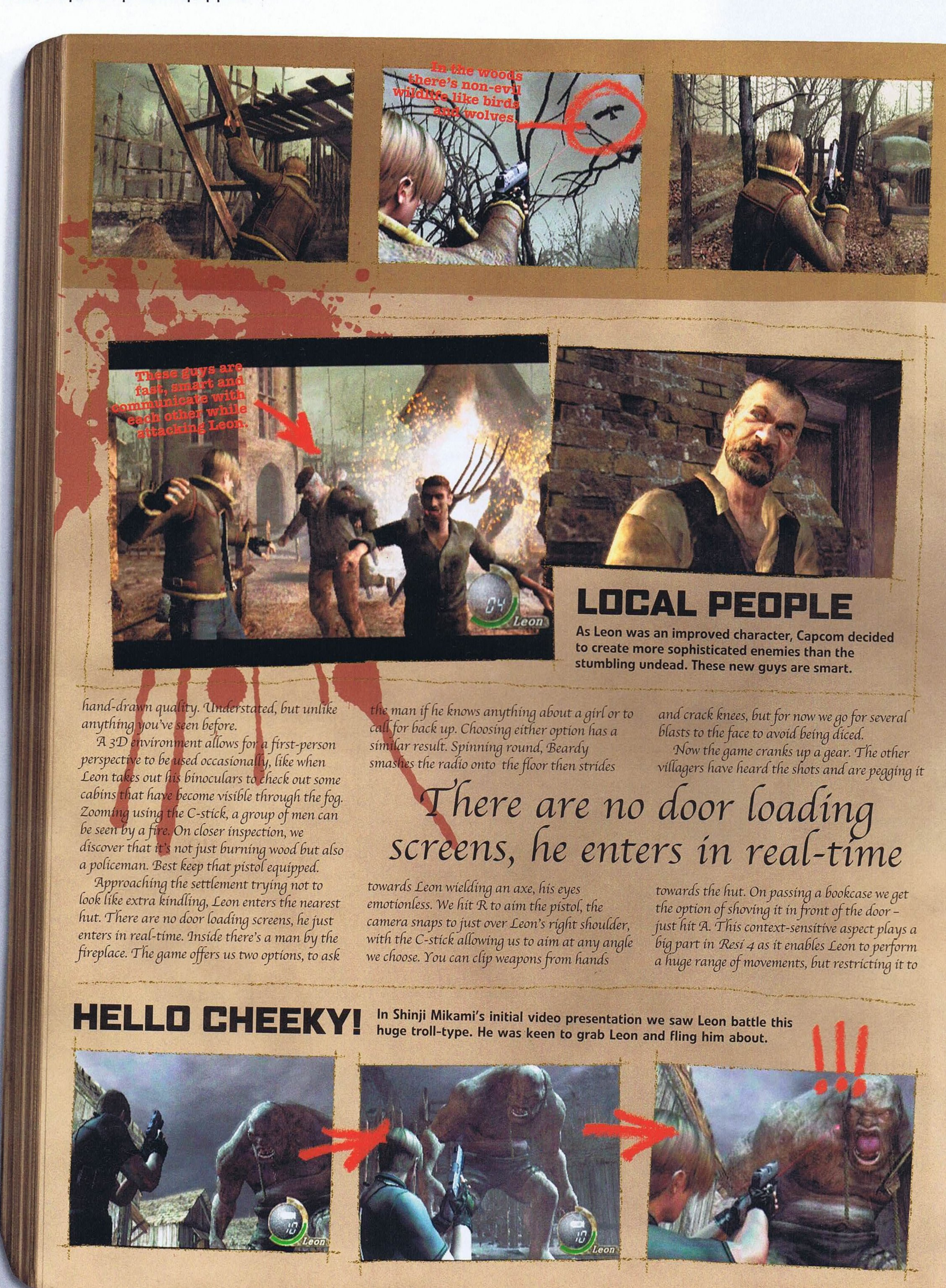
of view of a series of static cameras it's more like a conventional action game. This is possible owing to another surprise – no more rendered backgrounds. This is a full-fat 3D game

What's even more amazing is that the decision to go 3D seems to have had no detrimental effect on the quality of the visuals. They're stunning! From the textures on the tree trunks to the littering of the fallen leaves it has a wonderful



△ The whole demo had this grainy hue.


△ Leon – lover, hero and full time fop.



LOCAL PEOPLE

As Leon was an improved character, Capcom decided to create more sophisticated enemies than the stumbling undead. These new guys are smart.

hand-drawn quality. Understated, but unlike anything you've seen before.

A 3D environment allows for a first-person perspective to be used occasionally, like when Leon takes out his binoculars to check out some cabins that have become visible through the fog. Zooming using the C-stick, a group of men can be seen by a fire. On closer inspection, we discover that it's not just burning wood but also a policeman. Best keep that pistol equipped.

Approaching the settlement trying not to look like extra kindling, Leon enters the nearest hut. There are no door loading screens, he just enters in real-time. Inside there's a man by the fireplace. The game offers us two options, to ask the man if he knows anything about a girl or to call for back up. Choosing either option has a similar result. Spinning round, Beardy smashes the radio onto the floor then strides towards Leon wielding an axe, his eyes emotionless. We hit R to aim the pistol, the camera snaps to just over Leon's right shoulder, with the C-stick allowing us to aim at any angle we choose. You can clip weapons from hands and crack knees, but for now we go for several blasts to the face to avoid being diced.

Now the game cranks up a gear. The other villagers have heard the shots and are pegging it towards the hut. On passing a bookcase we get the option of shoving it in front of the door – just hit A. This context-sensitive aspect plays a big part in Resi 4 as it enables Leon to perform a huge range of movements, but restricting it to

> *There are no door loading screens, he enters in real-time*

HELLO CHEEKY!

In Shinji Mikami's initial video presentation we saw Leon battle this huge troll-type. He was keen to grab Leon and fling him about.



A FOR ACTION

The A button plays a big part in *Resi 4* as it's used to execute context-sensitive actions. At certain points, you're given an option, which, depending on the situation, will get Leon out of trouble or enable him to clamber around. It's not *Splinter Cell*-sophisticated but adds extra flexibility to the gameplay.

■ This is the first *Resi* to have on-screen information. Now you won't have to enter the inventory screen to see your ammo or health levels.

■ Binoculars are part of Leon's standard gear. Expect to collect more stuff as he now has 16 spaces in his inventory. No need for magic chests, then.

■ While spying on the bad guys seems smart, you can't do it at any given time. You have to wait till it's a context-sensitive option. Bummer.

"A mass of flailing limbs"

The world of Resi 4 is a dangerous place – and not just because of deranged country folk.

GUN FISHING

In playing the demo we got to sample four different weapons. The first was the pistol, which was equipped with a laser sight, and it made precise shots a doddle. The Uzi – lovely automatic fire – and the shotgun were trickier to aim accurately but as both were best used close up you could be sure of always hitting your target.

HARPOON Leon has already hooked a line onto the beast so his boat is dragged wherever the overgrown shrimp goes.

UZI

PISTOL The aiming's sensitive, but opens up lots of attacking options.

only certain situations keeps the game simple. In three steps we block the door, have Leon dive through a window and leap over a fence.

Now Leon isn't trapped, just surrounded. Villagers pour forward brandishing farm tools. A plug to the knee slows the nearest villager down, then we switch to the Uzi. A short volley rips into the pack, but they still come. Spotting a clock tower, we decide to move to a safer location. To clear the path a grenade's tossed into the next wave of mentalists, launching them into the air in mass of flailing limbs. We sprint to the tower and zip up the ladder, then hit the first floor. Glancing at the window, we spot two locals clambering in. We arm the shotgun and let rip. The shot shreds through the window frame, tearing the head off the nearest villager while the other's hammered yards through the air. It makes the old Resi head shot seem limp in comparison.

As more villagers flood in, Leon hits the ground by jumping from a nearby roof. Before we can dispense more justice from our pump-action, we hear church bells. The villagers come to a halt and drop their weapons. Their frenzy is replaced by a trance-like state seemingly induced by the chimes. The camera pans up, with Leon left breathless. And the demo's over.

Our brief dip into Resi 4's left us with many questions. Is this the work of Umbrella? What is the significance of the church bells? And what's wrong with the village people? What we know for certain is that Resident Evil 4 looks set to be incredible. If the final game has the intensity we've just experienced, we guarantee you'll be utterly blown away. (N)

Our brief dip into Resi 4 has left us with many questions

TOOLED UP

Grenades were amazing to use, but were only sensible at a safe distance from the target. In the video presentation we also saw Leon use a harpoon in a sequence that saw our hero tackle a giant mutant fish aboard a boat (see big shot, above).



SHOTGUN The action's incredibly brutal and violent, even for Resident Evil.

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PC ZONE, 14/01/2004
"Not since 2001´s Severance have we enjoyed a truly outstanding dose of crunching sword on bone action."

XBOX GAMER, 01/01/2004
"... plays well and is surprisingly addictive."

P2 MAGAZINE, 10/01/2004
"Graphically Knights of the Temple impresses..."

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*Sony PlayStation®2 only **Microsoft Xbox Live only



OUT IN APRIL






PlayStation®2

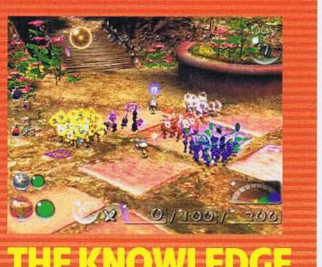












THE KNOWLEDGE

- Captain Olimar returns to the planet he was stranded on in the first game, to collect stuff.
- Two new Pikmin species – small white ones and large purple ones.
- Brand new two-character system, which allows you to switch between astronauts while out collecting.



△ Rack up your red 'min if there's plenty of fighting to be had. They're mad for it.



△ The new, more leisurely pace of the game is a welcome bonus.



△ What the..? How on Hocotate's that going to be worth anything?

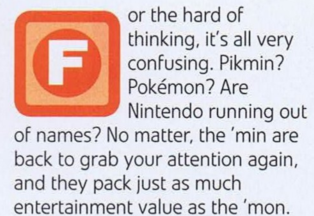
FACTFILE

- **Who's making it?**
  Neeeentendo
- **What have they done before?**
  Er… Pikmin
  RTS with vegetable men.



PIKMIN 2

Captain Olimar's back! But he's about to go away again – on an intergalactic bargain hunt…



For the hard of thinking, it's all very confusing. Pikmin? Pokémon? Are Nintendo running out of names? No matter, the 'min are back to grab your attention again, and they pack just as much entertainment value as the 'mon.

The follow up to Miyamoto's original title again follows the exploits of red-hootered Captain Olimar. After returning home to Hocotate after the events in *Pikmin*, he discovers that his space-faring company's gone bust. Cool as mayonnaise, he heads back to Planet Pikmin and persuades his armies of veggy mates to help him search for items he can sell as alien artifacts back home.

Olimar's not alone this time, though. Accompanied by comedy sidekick Loojie, it means the search for bottles, oranges, plates, dice, cans, Game & Watches and the like can be halved, reaping double the reward. Or so you'd think.

The idea's still the same – pick the various coloured Pikmin from the ground and get them to follow you around the environment searching for items – which, as you can see from the screenshots, they'll Pikhandle back for you. You can get a maximum of 100 Pikmin to follow you at any one time, and mix the colours – and abilities – of the Pikmin up.

Major changes this time round include, in no particular order, the new two-character system, a lack

> "WE'D LIKE TO THINK OF THIS MORE AS A 'REIMAGINING' OF THE ORIGINAL GAME"



△ When two parties meet, it looks fantastic.



PURPLE POWER

Loojie demonstrating the main ability of the newer Pikmin in the pack. Stand back folks.



We need to get our little army of vegetables onto that higher ledge to the left. What to do? Hmmm.



Using one of the purple 'Fatty 'min' in our party, we can fling them onto the other stone block for use…



…as a counter-weight. They're pretty heavy see, and a few Fatty 'min later we're free to go!



Don't be swayed by your favourite colour – pick the 'min that are right for the puzzle…











Forget football – this is the beautiful game.







Pik' that up! There's some great junk to find.

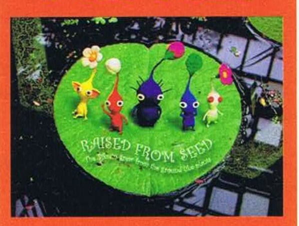


Drop it guys – it looks absolutely worthless.

of pressing time limit (meaning you've got much more time to actually *enjoy* the experience), two new varieties of Pikmin – purple and white and… well, to be honest, that's about it on the *major* changes front. We'd like to think of *Pikmin 2* more as a 'reimagining' of the original game – improving as it does on several areas, but not redefining the game at all. Not a bad thing.

The two new Pikmin types bring new abilities with them, naturally. If you've been following our letters pages (Mailbox – page 104), you'll have an idea of how they react in certain situations (mainly when a joke doesn't turn out to be very funny…). The fat purple ones make good use of their girth. Olimar can throw them at enemies, flattening them into bad mush. They can also be used to reach linked platforms. By that, we mean throw them onto a high ledge, and it's likely to drop down to a level Olimar can reach.

PIK' ME!



Unfamiliar with Pikmin? They grow from seeds which are automatically planted in the ground from the strange 'onions' on the planet. Each Pikmin can then be plucked from the soil (by pressing A) when their shoot appears. Red Pikmin – as you'd expect from a hot colour – can withstand fire and pack decent attacks. Blue Pikmin never drown in water – they love the stuff. Yellow Pikmin are the only 'min to be able to pick up bomb rocks. They can also be thrown higher than the other three. Both purple and white Pikmins' new skills bring even more variety to the game.

White Pikmin are a bit nasty really (go see Mailbox…). If they're hurled into the mouth of an enemy (of which there are around 60 types now), their poisons will bring them down like a sack of dead sheep.

Pikmin 2 also packs an enhanced two-player Challenge mode – with 30 fresh stages to unlock, rather than simply reworked levels from the main game. This acts as a head-to-head mode, with two of you competing to collect each level's items and enemy carcasses before the other. There are also sub-stages to each of these levels, where collecting a special item opens up a route to a lower level, again littered with enemies and artifacts. It's a big enough twist on the original's Challenge mode to warrant getting excited about.

Pikmin 2's not the sort of game that's going to cause Gamecube's to sell out across the globe. But for those of us with insider knowledge, it's big news indeed…

NGC VERDICT

UK	US	JAPAN
TBC	AUGUST	29TH APR



When we reviewed this originally, Greener said he had the feeling that *Pikmin* felt like it desparately needed a sequel. That's exactly what we've got here. Beautifully updated visuals and an exploration of the game's main theme (using vegetables to solve puzzles has been expanded upon, wonderfully). The two-player is the icing on the cake. Sweet.

ANTICIPATION RATING













THE KNOWLEDGE

- 40+ wrestlers, including Triple H, Chris Benoit, John Cena and Randy Orton, plus Legends including Andre the Giant.
- New Story mode simulating the path of a wannabe (CAW) wrestler from low profile bouts all the way up to winning WWE gold.
- New submission meters and the ability to target specific body parts.
- Innovative Momentum Shift.
- Bra & Panties matches make their first appearance on GC.

FACTFILE

Who's making it?
Yuke's

What have they done before?
WrestleMania XIX (NGC/28 74%)
Not Yuke's greatest moment, but they've a solid history of producing fun WWE titles.



△ It's like WrestleMania XX all over again! The character models look fantastic here, despite the gravity-defying hair.

WWE DAY OF RECKONING

Blending elements from the Smackdown! games is a great idea – if they can pull it off…

In a rather surprising move, THQ have announced that they are discontinuing their line of WrestleMania games for Gamecube. Granted, *WrestleMania XIX* was cursed with a godawful Story mode (of sorts) called Revenge, but it was basically a pretty fun, solid game with a lot going for it. Even if you're a rabid wrestling fan, there's no need to stumble around in blind, frothing panic at news of the demise of WrestleMania, though, because we've got all the info about the game they're doing instead – *Day of Reckoning*. Not a great deal has been confirmed at time of writing, but what we do know is enough to pique our interest – oh yes. Consider us exceptionally piqued.

You'd reasonably expect updated graphics, even more realistic wrestlers, smoother animation and so on from a new WWE title. In this, *Day of Reckoning* doesn't disappoint, as you can tell from the screenshots. The wrestlers look better than ever, the entrances are even more cinematic, with impressive pyrotechnics and official music, and even at this relatively early stage we have high hopes that the presentation will really wow WWE fans. As well as *WrestleMania*, Tokyo-based developers Yuke's have been responsible for the immensely popular *Smackdown!* series of games on PS2, and in *Day of Reckoning* there are numerous striking influences you can trace back to *Here Comes The Pain*.

There are still two grapples, weak and strong, but the number of available moves has been expanded (by an undisclosed number) and you can now target specific body parts.

Not only does targeting body parts add a healthy dose of realism, but it also feeds nicely into another borrowed concept – submission meters. When you apply a submission move, the effectiveness of it is determined by your wrestler's statistics, and the victim's chance to wriggle out of it or get to the ropes by his. A bar appears, and both players hammer on the buttons like wild things, with a cursor drifting to one end or

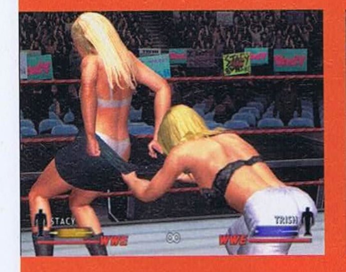
> "YOU CAN'T JUST ANNIHILATE SOMEONE WITH 40 CONSECUTIVE CHAIR SHOTS"


DID YOU KNOW? In ancient Greece, the warlike Spartan girls used to wrestle in the nude. Obviously bra and panties had not been invented by that point.

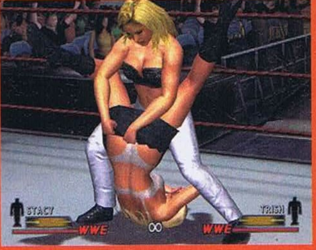
It's definitely going to be pants in some places…

LADY RUCK

For the fairer sex, the women of the WWE certainly play dirty… And now they're doing it on your Gamecube.



■ For the first time ever on Gamecube – yes, it's the (in)famous Bra & Panties match.



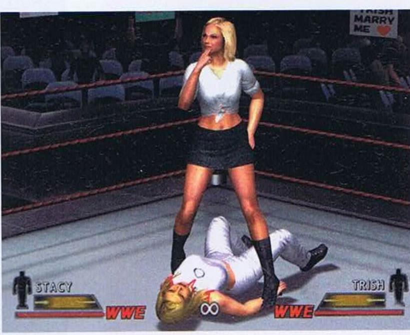
■ What you make of it depends on whether you think it's fun seeing two women tug off each other's clothes.



■ Until such time when the game designs look exactly like the real deal, it's not really that thrilling.



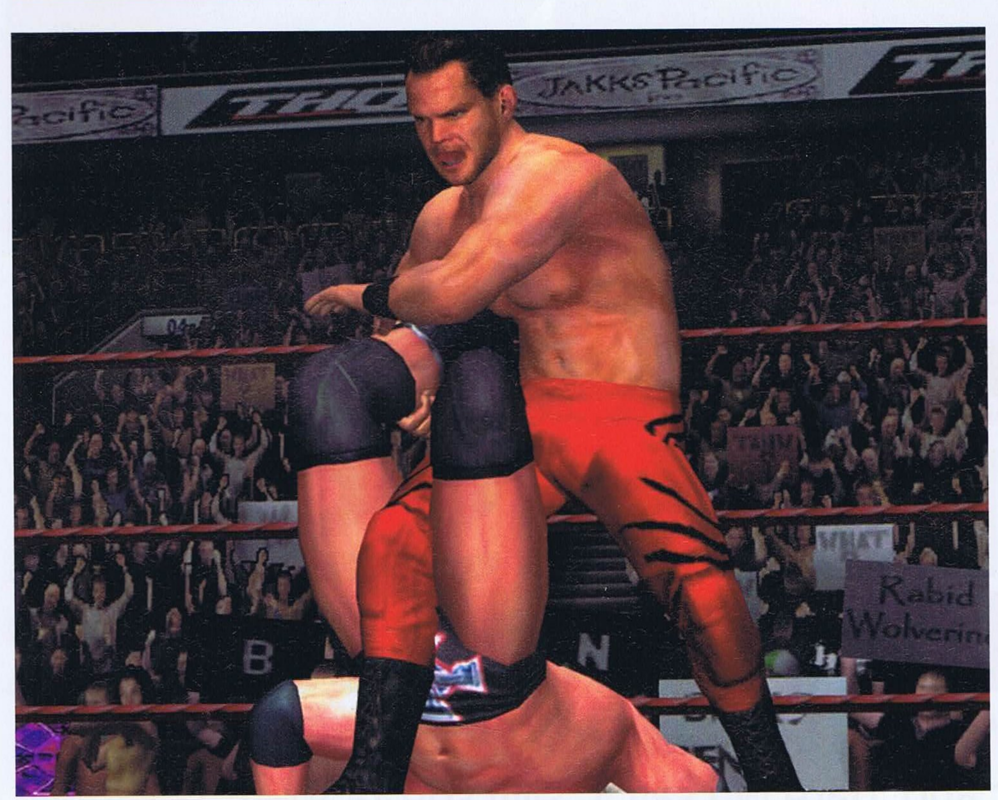
△ At time of writing, Benoit just won the main event at WrestleMania, nicking HHH's belt. Good.



△ It looks like Stacy! A little bit. Around the eyes.



△ Not a German Suplex, but a rarer Dragon one.



△ Submission expert Chris Benoit locks in the Sharpshooter, made famous by the legendary Bret Hart, among others.

another. You get the idea. The last major gameplay feature is a new one – a Superstar-specific Momentum Shift feature which allows you to turn the tide of a bout. Depending on how well this is implemented, it could be a valuable addition indeed.

There's scant information on match types, but we do know that weapons can play a crucial role in matches, dealing out tremendous damage but breaking easily, so you can't just annihilate someone with 40 consecutive chair shots. Even after just a few, their faces will bloody up and become damaged, which is nice. Not for them, obviously. Two game modes have been getting the most attention, Bra & Panties and School of Hard Knocks. The former, because it's never appeared on the Gamecube before and has, y'know, ladies ripping each other's clothes off. The latter because it's an intriguing, fresh new take on the traditional Career mode. You create a wrestler with the usual plethora of visual options and moves to choose from, but you start your career right at the bottom rung of the grapple ladder, facing no-name jobbers in non-televised matches. Prove your worth and you may get onto Velocity, Heat, then finally into the big shows and pay-per-views, challenging for titles and having to defend them should you prevail. It's a shame you can't use an existing Superstar in this mode, but nevertheless we're keen to get our teeth into it and see if it succeeds where so many other season modes have failed.

PS2 has had the lion's share of great wrestling titles for long enough. If Gamecube is to challenge its dominance, it will need something very special. And if *Day of Reckoning* fulfils all its promise, it could very well be that game.

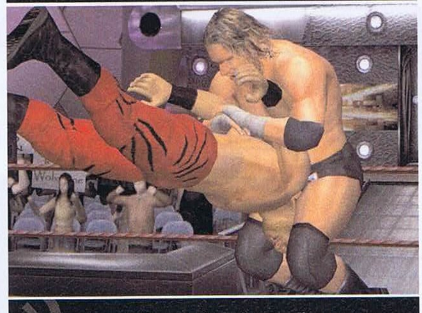
SUBMIT! UNCLE!



Chris Benoit is one of the first confirmed wrestlers in the game, and is known for his intensity, aggression, and nasty Crippler Crossface finishing move. Expect to see Benoit players making full use of the new submission meter system, which is based on the stats of both wrestlers and boils down to a button-bashing frenzy. Now that you can target specific body parts, this makes submissions even more potent.

NGC VERDICT

UK JUNE | US JUNE | JAPAN TBA



The classic strong/weak grapple system married to some of *Here Comes The Pain's* best features makes this a title to be excited about. We really like the idea of building up a wrestler from scratch in School of Hard Knocks, and with the brand-spanking-new graphics it's got a lot in its favour. Fingers crossed, it'll live up to our cautiously high expectations.

ANTICIPATION RATING





1 2 3 4 5





THE KNOWLEDGE

- Over 40 levels spread across three distinct time periods.
- Perforate demons with a selection of 12 meaty weapons.
- Three new vehicles to toss around, including a Tim Weaver-style combine harvester.



△ Cyclopean crabs are a mainstay of the Atlantis levels. They aren't that tough, though, and a chainsaw should sort 'em out.

FACTFILE

Who's making it?
Climax Entertainment

What have they done before?
BattleZone: Rise Of The Black Dogs (N64) (NGC/40 73%)
A sprawling and exhaustive futuristic battler.



SERIOUS SAM NEXT ENCOUNTER

Sam's back, and this time it's serious. In a very basic and, dare we say it, silly sort of way.



△ These mechs spill cogs and machinery as you pump them full of lead. Pleasant.



While everyone else in the world of FPS development is trying feverishly to churn out fresh, innovative titles, UK-based code monkeys Climax are cobbling together possibly the most ridiculous, back-to-basics shooter ever conceived. There's no complex narrative, no character interaction, no puzzles, no advanced physics – *Serious Sam* is just a brainless blaster, and the funny thing is, that's what the developers are aiming for. They *know* it's daft, and we can only commend them for that.

Serious Sam appeared on Xbox, but the good news is that it's been totally revamped for Gamecube. First, there's a new development team on the case and second, the game engine has been completely rebuilt to suit the new hardware. So what new features can we we expect from the Gamecube incarnation? Well, a neat 'combo' system has been implemented that measures how many nasties you kill in one continuous chain and scores you accordingly. That doesn't sound like much, but it's thoroughly entertaining when you rack up a combo in the hundreds.

> **"A NEAT COMBO SYSTEM MEASURES HOW MANY NASTIES YOU KILL IN A CHAIN"**

And then there are the vehicles. Not only can Sam bumble around in a rocket-lobbing super jeep, but he can also commandeer a

ENEMY MINE

A wide range of critters to gun into next week.



■ These hounds attack in packs from all sides. Back into a corner and fend them off with a bucketload of lead.



■ An FPS isn't an FPS without a monkey. And these are monkeys with big, sharp knives.



■ These rotor-sporting bad guys buzz around your head trying to bite your face off.



■ As well as demons there are huge, bipedal mechanoids to fell. Luckily, they're weaker than they look.



△ The vineyard level pits you against hordes of these evil mechanoids.

submarine and, more bizarrely, a combine harvester. And yes, you can mow down enemies with it. Blood even spurts out the back. Lovely. Many of the features that made the original great have remained, however: melee combat with the chainsaw; harrowing 'suicide bomber' monsters; and the general vibe of vibrant, non-stop shootiness are all accounted for. You basically charge through each level, kill everything, open doors and proceed to the next level – it's that simple. There's a spot of key collecting, but that's about as taxing as things get.

Graphically, things are crisp, clear and colourful. The garish blend of bright greens and aqua blues really emphasises the game's flippant nature and serves as a constant reminder of how stupid the whole thing really is. One of the more impressive levels sees you gunning down demonic mechanoids in a French vineyard, replete with huge vats of trampled grapes; the rolling hills stretch for miles into the distance, the sun glistens against the water and you forget for a second that you're slaying hordes of screeching demons with a chainsaw. Other eye-soothing levels include a sun-bleached Roman villa and a sprawling Atlantean temple; both a joy to play and a joy to look at. Your eyeballs are well cared for, let's put it that way.

But when it comes down to it, do we *really* care about this? Well, it looks nice, it plays like it should and it has no pretensions of offering anything more than simple, straight-out blasting. And that's something of a rarity on Gamecube, so we're eager to see how it turns out. Its pedigree is excellent – the Xbox game was very good – so the improvements should make it great.

ME TOO!



A lot of time has been spent refining the game's multiplayer modes. The most entertaining of these has to be the co-operative one where you and a mate traverse the game's single-player levels as a team, because there's also an element of sneakiness as you can disrupt and steal the other player's combo by killing them mid-fight. How much do you like your friend? And for how long will he trust you?



△ You can rack up some meaty extra points with combos.



△ The more tactful gamer can crawl around sniping enemies.



△ The combo system makes things ridiculously frantic at times.



△ Hey, this looks like the Roman Baths near our office. Really.



△ These armoured ants populate the Rome level.



△ Huge enemies like this break up the action.



△ Sam's jeep can fire rocket-propelled grenades.

NGC VERDICT



The Gamecube definitely has space for a colourful comedy shooter right now, and *Serious Sam's* co-operative mode and multiplayer matches have got us eager to try the finished version. It's nonsense, but we're not afraid to admit a certain fondness for its childlike charms. And come on – mowing down enemies in a combine harvester? Wah indeed!

ANTICIPATION RATING







THE KNOWLEDGE

- Follows the plot of the film/book.
- Play as Harry Potter, Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger, swapping between them to make use of their different attributes and spells.
- Includes five minigames – including one based around seahorse fishing, a Hippogriff flying game and a section devoted to the fine sport of owl racing.

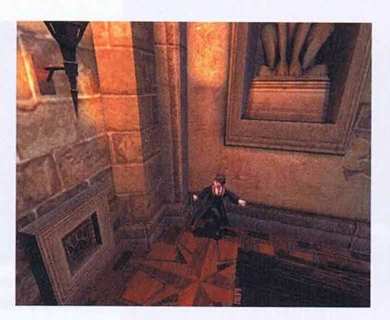
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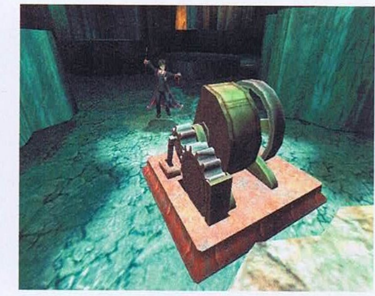
Who's making it?
EA (UK)

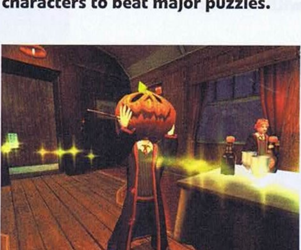
What have they done before?
Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets (NGC/75)
A bit easy, but great looking and solidly put together.



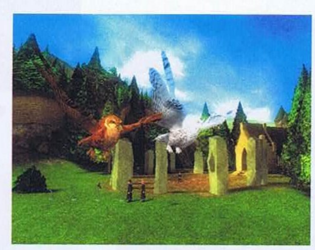
△ You'll need to swap between the characters to beat major puzzles.







△ A spell battle during the first level – Hogwarts Express.



△ One of *Azkaban's* five minigames – owl racing. What a hoot! sorry.



△ Harry gets two unique spells – a grappling hook one and one that uses positive energy.

HARRY POTTER
AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN

Two's company, three's a crowd? Not here it isn't…



The buzzword is 'mature'. Harry's grown up in his latest movie, a dark tale of his third year at Hogwarts, where he encounters both escaped convict Sirius Black and the disturbing guards of Azkaban prison, the Dementors.

The game's attempting to follow this change in direction for the Potter story, with animation that reflects the more mature movements of the junior wizards, and a more 'grown up' approach to the game's mechanics. For the first time you can control the actions of all three of the lead characters, swapping between them where their different skills are needed to solve puzzles. Harry's the most athletic, for instance, and can make leaps that the other two characters can't. Hermione's a thinker and small enough to crawl under gates, while Ron has a 'sixth sense' that allows him to identify false walls and bookcases that aren't what they seem (you'll get a visual 'trigger' when you're playing as Ron and come across something).

In addition to this, each character comes with their own small selection of distinct spells, as well as sharing two common ones. The development team will encourage you to use all the spells by ensuring most creatures you encounter require two spells to defeat them. And the spell fights do look tremendous…

> **"MOST CREATURES YOU ENCOUNTER REQUIRE TWO SPELLS TO DEFEAT THEM"**

You'll get to fly on the back of a Hippogriff, find the Marauder's Map (after nailing four challenges related to the wizards that created it), take part in minigames and go head-to-head against a friend. In short, there's going to be lots to do.

NGC VERDICT

UK	US	JAPAN
4TH JUN	2ND JUN	26TH JUN



Naturally, this sort of thing's for the little people – the baby gamers out there. That said, the development team at EA's UK studios don't seem to be sitting on their laurels. Or their hands. They're reflecting Harry's growing up with a more immersive, action-driven gaming experience. A game that doesn't let you rely on one spell to get you from start to finish. Good.

ANTICIPATION RATING





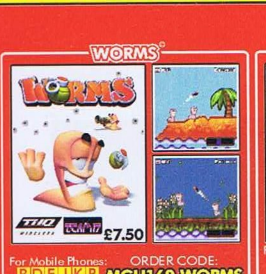



DID YOU KNOW? The Harry Potter games have sold more than 20 million copies around the world. That's one for everyone in Shanghai – China's largest city.

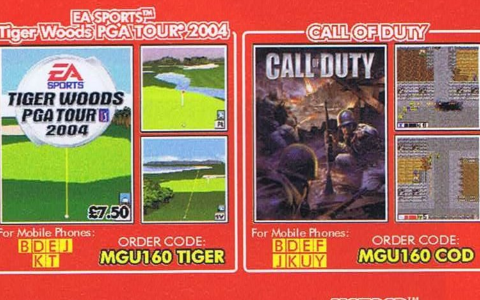




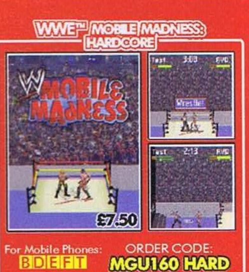
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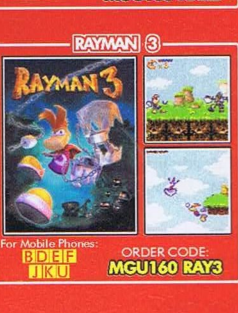


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EA SPORTS™ FIFA Football 2004 Mobile International Edition (£7.50)	MGU160 FIFA	BDEJ KPT
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CALL OF DUTY	MGU160 COD	BDEF JKUY

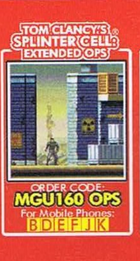


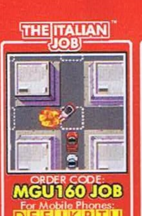

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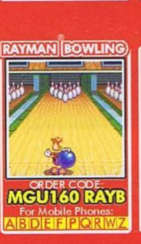



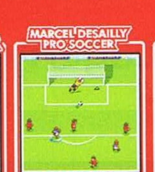


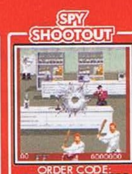


Game	Order Code	For Mobile Phones
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TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL: EXTENDED OPS	MGU160 OPS	BDEFJK
SK8TRIX	MGU160 TRIX	BDEJKT
SNOWBOARD X	MGU160 BOARD	ABCDEJPT
TOP GUN AIR COMBAT	MGU160 TOP	DEJT
THE ITALIAN JOB	MGU160 JOB	DEFJKPTU
VAMPIRE BLOODLINE	MGU160 VAMP	BDEFJTU
DARTS	MGU160 BULL	ABDEJKOT
BOULDERDASH M.E.	MGU160 DASH	ABDEJPT
BAYWATCH BEACH VOLLEYBALL	MGU160 BAY	BDEFJKTU
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RAYMAN BOWLING	MGU160 RAYB	ABDEFPQRWZ
EVIL DEAD PINBALL	MGU160 DEAD	BDEJT
POP IDOL UPSTAGED	MGU160 IDOL	BDEJPT
LOTUS CHALLENGE	MGU160 LOTUS	BDEJK
CHESSMASTER	MGU160 CHESS	BDEFJKUY
MARCEL DESAILLY PRO SOCCER	MGU160 FOOT	ABDEJKY
NIGHTMARE CREATURES	MGU160 MARE	BDEFJKU
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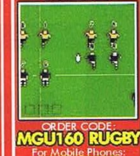




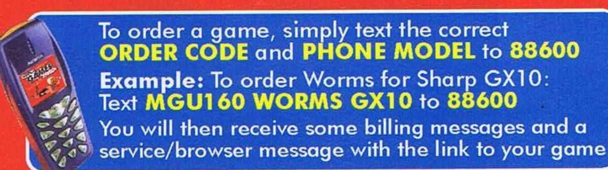








Game	Order Code	For Mobile Phones
RAYMAN GOLF	MGU160 RAYG	ABDEFN OPQRWY
SEXY POKER 2004	MGU160 SEXY	BDEFJKUY
PURSUIT SQUAD	MGU160 PURSUIT	BDEFJKTUY
BLOCK BREAKER DELUXE	MGU160 BLOCK	BDEFJKUY
FRUIT MACHINE	MGU160 SLOT	ABCDEFJNOPTW
SPEED DEVILS	MGU160 DEVIL	ABDEFNOY
PLANET ZERO	MGU160 PLANET	ABDEFJOPR
BEAT THE DEALER	MGU160 BEAT	ABCDEFT
PENALTY CHALLENGE	MGU160 PEN	BDEJKT
REVS!	MGU160 REVS	BDEJKT
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3510i	B	6600	F	T720i	T
6310i	C	SHARP GX10	J	V300	U
3100	D	GX10i	J	V500	U
3300	D	GX20	K	V525	U
5100	D	SIEMENS C55	N	V600	U
6100	D	M50	O	SONY ERICSSON T610	W
6610	D	M55	P	SAGEM My V65	Y
6800	D	S55	P	LG 5300i	Z
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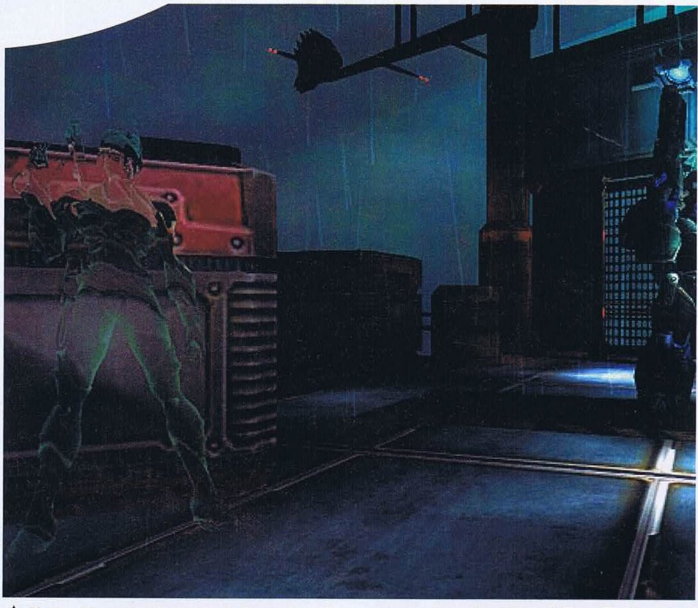
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STOP PRESS! Good things come to those who wait. So we've reserved some space for games that come in bang on our deadline, right here for you each month. We'll be cramming these pages with the very latest screens and info each issue – so you won't miss a thing…

EVERY OTHER NEW GAME THAT MATTERS – EVERY SINGLE MONTH!

ROUNDUP



△ Nova, the game's central character, demonstrates her cloaking ability. She's also able to do all the swinging, climbing and scaling you'd expect from a game star.



△ Nova's got a decent array of death-bringers, including Gauss guns and flamethrowers. She doesn't always fight alone, though – she works with allies…

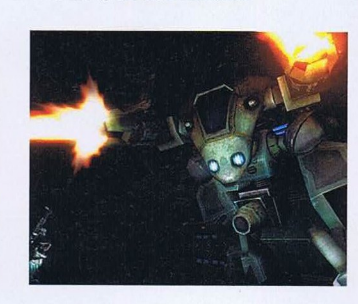
STARCRAFT GHOST

New shots of Blizzard's eagerly awaited tactical shooter.

Guns. Kick-ass lead characters. Heavily armoured and tooled-up enemies. How many of our favourite things can Blizzard cram into one game?

Most of them, it would seem, and they're doing it very well if these latest shots are anything to go by. Excellent.

Haunting us this autumn



HOT NEW MOBILE ENTERTAINMENT

GBA ROUNDUP

MARIO GOLF ADVANCE TOUR

Importers, get ready.



bout to launch in the United States, *Advance Tour* has moved on a step from previous GBA Mario Golf titles, taking a step into the third dimension. Yes, you create your character, then send them off round the links in glorious 3D, building skills to take them from amateur to pro.

In Japan the game came bundled with a wireless GBA-GC link adaptor, just like *Pokémon* did before it, but there's no news on whether this will be repeated in the US. At any rate, you'll want some sort of linking device, because via the magic of connectivity you can transfer characters from the GBA game to *Mario Golf: Toadstool Tour*.

And if you can't think why you'd prefer to play as a nonentity when you could be thwacking balls about as Mario, Wario or even King Boo is beyond us, you'll still want to take advantage of the extra features hooking your GBA to your GC opens up, particularly the new courses for *Advance Tour*.

Out on the 21st June in the US



△ There's a lot on that little screen. Let's hope this doesn't suffer from the GC title's Boo infestation.

SPACE RAIDERS

The game of the cheap snack.


Okay, that was a lie. This isn't a game based on the futuristic 10p crisp things from the 1980s. No, it's the sequel to… wait for it… Space Invaders.

Developed by Taito, the company behind the original *Invaders, Space Raiders* sees you taking on the role of a street gang leader, a police officer or, erm, a fashion photographer (yes, *really*), each of whom has to fight through hordes of aliens in order to find someone they care about. As you can see from the shot here, the aliens seem to attack in fairly structured waves, just like they did in the original game. The graphics may be new, but we're betting on lots of retro gameplay.

Raiding date not yet set.



△ It looks like the aliens made it to the planet's surface after all…



△ Big up turn-based battling! Mmm.



△ Man, you're mega. You know that?

MEGA MAN X COMMAND MISSION

Capcom hero's back for more…


Are RPGs the new stealth? *Pokémon* has made the leap (see page 42) and now action hero Mega Man is about to do the same. He's got some new armour to help him sneak around and will be aided in his quest by team-mates – you can choose up to three of them. The backgrounds are all in full 3D and the battles are turn-based. If it sounds like it's taken a whole chapter out of *Final Fantasy's* book, at least it's a *good* book.

Role-ing out this autumn

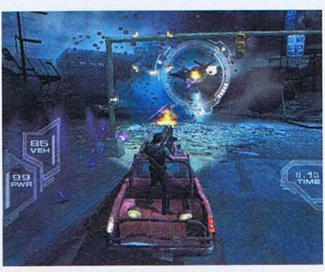
TERMINATOR 3 REDEMPTION

Back to the future with the virtual governor of California.


To be honest, we're bewildered. This isn't listed as a Gamecube game on Atari's press info, and its prequel didn't come out on Gamecube, but Atari have assured us that it will be released for the console.

Not to be confused with *Terminator 3: The Rise of the Machines, Redemption* is also based on the movie Terminator 3 and, as before, you take on the role of The Terminator, as played by Big Arn. However, the main difference is that it's based on the world of the films but not any one film in particular. Because of this *Redemption* will enable you to visit places and follow storylines that have only really been hinted at in the films. And then you can shoot them to bits. We're also promised "incredible action-driving only the Terminator license can provide". But will it live up to the second film's tanker-bike chase, eh?

He'll be back this summer



△ The locations may be new, but they're as bleak as we expected.



△ There's nothing like flying shell casings to convey rapid firepower.



△ Never trust someone who lives on bananas.

MARIO VS DONKEY KONG

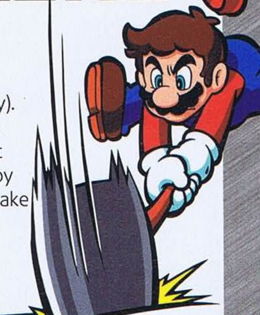
But we thought they were friends!

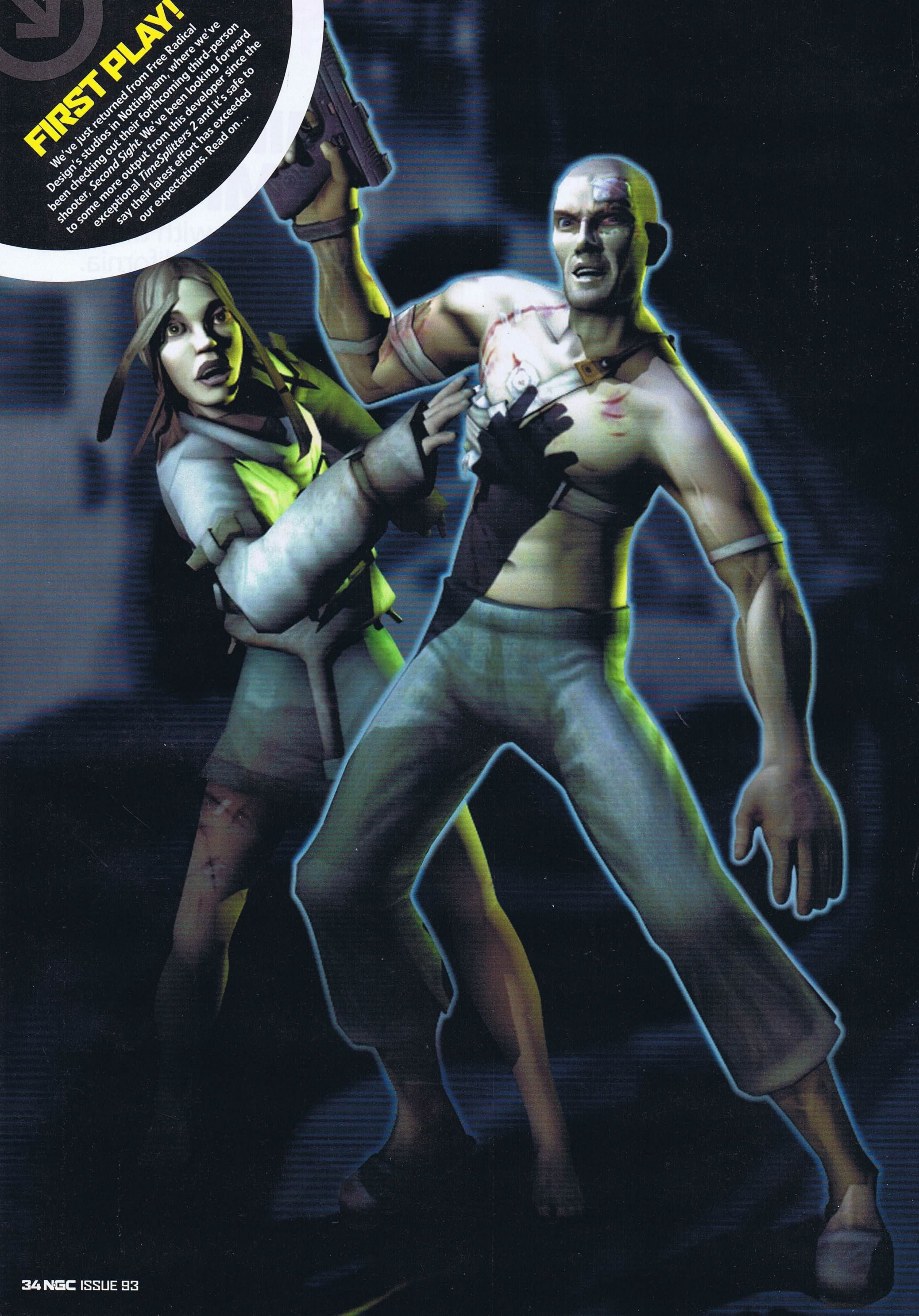

Take yourself back in time. Waaaay back to 1981 when a little chap called Jumpman took on a giant gorilla that had kidnapped his lady friend, the fair Pauline. Pauline became Peach, Jumpman became Mario and Mario and Donkey Kong became friends. Aah.

But NO! Nintendo's new GBA title *Mario Vs Donkey Kong* shows the motheaten monkey getting up to at least some of his old tricks, and forcing Mazza to leap between platforms and thump enemies (with his butt, naturally).

It's not the only Mario game coming out on GBA this year. At E3, we expect to see a Game Boy specific *Mario Party* (watch it make use of the link-up) and *Mario Pinball*. More news soon…

***MvDK* Release date TBC**





FIRST PLAY!

We've just returned from Free Radical Design's studios in Nottingham, where we've been checking out their forthcoming third-person shooter, *Second Sight*. We've been looking forward to some more output from this developer since the exceptional *TimeSplitters 2* and it's safe to say their latest effort has exceeded our expectations. Read on…

TURN OVER
For an in-depth look at *Second Sight's* best features, plus an extensive chat with David Doak about the game's direction…

MIND GAMES

Is Second Sight the most mental third-person shooter you'll ever play? We visit Free Radical Design to find out…

"Do you know, I actually had the idea for the game when we first formed Free Radical," says David Doak, Director of the company that brought *TimeSplitters* into life – and the man who delivered *GoldenEye* on N64. "It's inspired by films like Jacob's Ladder," he adds, "where you have this idea of a 'building revelation'."

The game in question is *Second Sight*, a third-person action-adventure in which your brain's your killer weapon.

The action takes place across two timelines. The first begins when John Vattic, the game's main character, wakes up in a medical facility with no memory. The second timeline takes place six months earlier and is used, among other things (we'll explain later), to help fill in gaps in the player's knowledge about how he got to be in the mess he's in.

So how does this work then? Well, take the end of the opening level for example. Details about your character and his abilities remain a blur – until you find a computer that contains details of a deceased woman. But, again, you have no recollection of her.

It's that this point that the first level ends and the game starts getting all clever. John Vattic has a flashback to events that occurred six months previously. Events that you participate in. "John was a researcher," we're told. "He's asked to join a bunch of marines on a mission to Siberia, where an ex-Nazi collaborator has been doing experiments with psychic abilities." John is sceptical until he meets a 'mystic' woman who's part of the mission. She tells him that he has to go because 'he's the guy that's going to save them'. He reluctantly goes ahead with the mission.

When you're playing through this flashback, you're required to protect the woman – the same deceased woman whose info you see on the computer at the end of that confusing first level. Successfully defend the mystic and you're reawakened from your flashback. You're staring at the computer screen again – only this time the information tells you that the woman is still alive. Neat. In effect, the flashbacks you have in the second timeline give you the ability to alter the past to change the future – your present. Er… make sense?

> "THE FLASHBACKS GIVE YOU THE ABILITY TO ALTER THE PAST TO CHANGE THE FUTURE – YOUR PRESENT. ER... MAKE SENSE?"

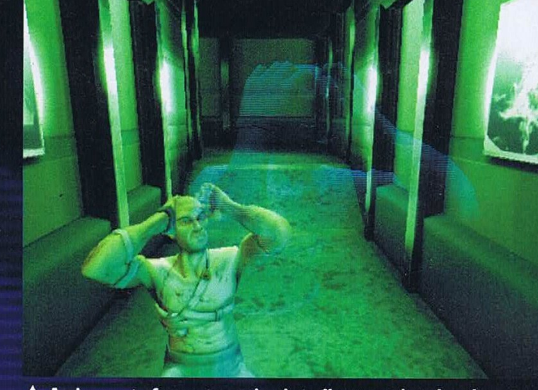
It's an intriguing plot device, made all the sweeter by the fact that even if you fail the mission you get to see the consequences of that failure played out in a piece of video – giving you information you wouldn't see had you succeeded. "You feel as though you're creating and developing the story yourself," says David. "We'd show you more, but as in films like The Sixth Sense, there are twists that, once known, will take away from the overall experience – you'll have to try it for yourself!". Which we do. Over the page…







"Second Sight's been in development for around two years"



△ A nice spot of remote projection allows you're ghostly persona to wander about and check out the level ahead.



△ Vattic starts as an unwilling researcher for the military.



△ The game takes place in all kinds of surroundings, such as…



△ …this squad-based battle in open, snowy terrain.



△ You can take people hostage to use as human shields. Here John blasts through a glass partition which breaks at the point of impact, rather than triggering a generic splintering animation.



△ When we saw this level – Dave sneaked about without firing a shot. A completely different approach this time then. Yup.



△ There are going to be 18 levels in all and Free Radical expect each to take between 30 and 40 minutes to work through.



We're sitting in Free Radical's Nottingham studio and in front of us is a Gamecube devkit running *Second Sight*. David's about to show us the game's opening sequence.

Bright, green-white lights that illuminate a corridor pass overhead as main man John Vattic's wheeled through a hospital-like building to a secure area. He's obviously heavily sedated. You see his captors leaning over him, their warped voices discussing him as they do so, letting slip details about how dangerous he is. What a psycho he is. Intriguing. A little while later he wakes up alone in the 'hospital' with no memory of anything. Not even his name. Nothing. It's from here that you take control.

"*Second Sight*'s been in development for around two years," explains David as we watch the action. "It's almost finished now, so we've reached the point where we want to increase awareness of the game."

Despite being a long time in the making, *Second Sight* still hasn't got a publisher. "It's worked to our advantage, though," says David. "Without a publisher we've been able to take our time over development. We haven't been pushed into hitting deadlines. We've been able to make the game exactly the way we want it".

Initial impressions at this point then? Well, it's certainly cinematic, we'll give it that. Visually speaking it's gorgeous too. Smooth, crisp and stylised. Very, *very* nice indeed. If we had to draw comparisons, we'd say that it's a little bit like a cross between *TimeSplitters 2* and *Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes*. That can only be a good thing.

"IT'S A BIT LIKE A CROSS BETWEEN TIMESPLITTERS 2 AND METAL GEAR SOLID"

The art style in particular, is reminiscent of *TS2*. "That's what everyone says," laughs Doak. It's true, though. The use of colour, the design of the character models, the way they move – all very *'Splitters*. In the same way that the French films Delicatessen and The City of Lost Children seem eerily alike, so do *TS2* and *Second Sight*. "It's not something we intentionally set out to do," says Doak, "although many of the team did work on *TS2* – here, for example, (*he taps the screen*) the guy who did the textures on this level also worked on *TimeSplitters*." That explains it – but the similarities extend further.





△ The physics engine was one of the toughest aspects of the game to get right according to David – but it's worked a treat, giving a sense of flexibility to the way you approach situations.



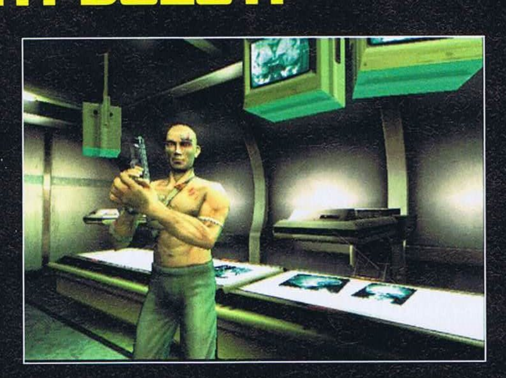


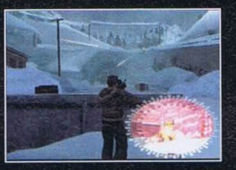
△ As ever, splash damage can be used to take out groups of enemies. What's more, in *Second Sight* you can move explosive items to your target.

STEALTHY DOES IT

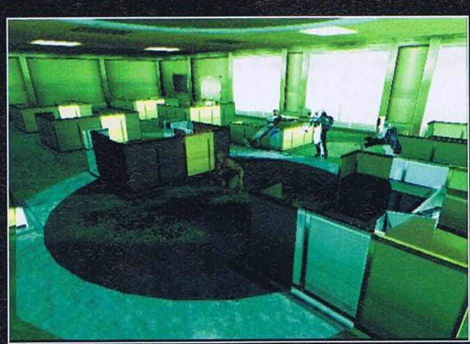
"You can get through parts of the game without firing a single shot if you want. It's entirely up to you," explains David. Even though there's plenty of blasting action you can, if you so desire, take things a bit steadier and use your brain. You can hide in lockers, conceal bodies in shadows so as not to alert guards and, of course, you can use your special charm ability to make yourself invisible.

We were particularly chuffed with the smoothness of John's stealthy actions – especially his ability to lean flat up against a wall and actually creep around the corner (something that even Metal Gear *hasn't managed – it forces you to come off the wall and walk around instead). The multiple camera angles also come into great effect here, allowing you unparalleled freedom when it comes to selecting the most appropriate view. Hats off to Free Radical for these minor but oh-so-welcome additions.*









Take the character models. They have the same unique caricatured style that made *TS2* stand out. "People are very good at spotting things that aren't real," David points out. "Especially fake people. There's this recent trend towards movie realism, but I think people try to get too realistic about things, particularly in games where the hardware isn't good enough to do it well. So when you're trying to make people, they often end up looking like mannequins.

"For us, we feel it's better to do it in a strongly artistic way, because this way you're able to get a heightened sense of characterisation into your models – you can make your bad guys *look* like bad guys."

He's got a point too. *Second Sight* oozes character; it has a strong, almost comic-book atmosphere to it – and in a way that doesn't sacrifice detail either.

The result is a gameworld that looks and feels solid and coherent. Everything looks like it belongs there, which, despite the almost otherworldly atmosphere, makes everything so strangely believable.

This feeling of playing in a solid, tangible world is helped no end by the game's physics. For example, the opening section in the medical facility acts a little bit like a training mode. You have to break out, but there are no aggressors in the vicinity – giving you the chance to play with some of your mental abilities. Like telekinesis. This lets you target various items in the environment, such as computer monitors, and then, with the power of your mind (or the, er… C-stick) you can pick them up and lob them around the room. By the time you start getting into the action, you'll discover the practical uses of your mind powers. You can pick up enemies and throw them through windows, levitate partitions in front of you and use them as shields or pick up explosive barrels and throw them towards a group of enemies before blowing the barrel up with a weapon to take them all down in one go. Boof!

Controlling all this chaos is remarkably intuitive. The game employs an intelligent lock-on system that focuses on the most important things first (no frustrating *Everything or Nothing*-style moments here). In a nice touch, ghosted-out indicators are shown above any other items of interest, so you'll always know which enemies or items you'll be able to manipulate or destroy.

> **"HURL PATIENTS OUT OF THEIR HOSPITAL BEDS AND AGITATE GORILLAS"**

"A cracking third-person adventure"







GOING PSYCHO

There are six main abilities available to you which you earn at various 'checkpoints' through the game. There's a meter that depletes as you use them. "There are also penalties for using your psi abilities incorrectly too," David explains. So you have to be careful how you use them…

PSYCHIC ATTACK
This is the first psychic ability that we witnessed in Second Sight. Early on during a stressful encounter with a guard – John Vattic unleashes an attack that warps the screen and throws the guard in question violently backwards like a rag doll, bouncing him off a nearby reception desk. Think 'Jedi Force Throw' and you'll have the right idea. An excellent last-ditch attack when you find yourself surrounded by enemies.

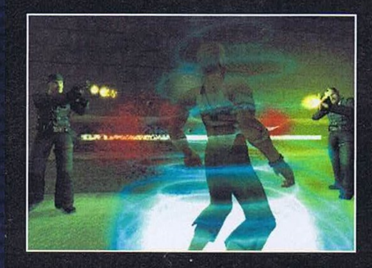
TELEKINESIS
You can't beat this for style. Anything that you're able to manipulate in the game-world is flagged up by ghosted-out arrow icons. Target them with the lock-on and you can chuck monitors around, grab idle weapons and even lob enemies through windows, over precipices and, if the mood takes you, at each other. You can also use this technique in conjunction with weapons.

HEAL
Very handy psychic ability, is this. By focusing your energy you can regain any lost health. However, you can't move when you use it, making you vulnerable to attack. If you're caught in the act of healing and shot, you'll snap out of the process. So finding a quiet spot to regenerate health is a pretty good idea. This adds another layer of stealth-play and, as far as we saw, there were no traditional health pick-ups in the levels.

CHARM
Like Obi-Wan Kenobi, you use this on your enemies. Charm them, and you make yourself invisible to them. As we explained earlier, though, you have to be clever how you use your psi abilities. Walk up to a guard in full view, use it on him and naturally he won't be fooled – and your psi-meter will be penalised for your stupidity. A cracking ability for the stealthier player, though.

REMOTE PROJECTION
Brilliant. You can project out an alter ego – a second, ghostly version of your character – that you can then navigate around the environment. In one example, we were shown John's projection crossing security laser beams and deactivating them from the other side. Once the real John was clear of the security trap he could bring it back online to prevent any guards from following him. Clever stuff.

POSSESSION
Using the remote projection technique, John can possess any guards he comes across. In one example, he takes control of one of a pair of guards. He shoots the other guard in the foot before returning control to his own body. On walking to the location of the guards, you discover that your mischief has caused them to shoot each other to death. A devious and hilarious means of getting ahead.









△ You can rip items like these monitors off the walls and, if you're in the mood, you can smash it over this guard's head. Until he be dead.

Furthermore, you can use both weapons and your psi abilities smoothly in conjunction with each other. You can, for example, pull a weapon towards you from the floor and then use it the second it hits your hands. It's all very smooth and beautifully slick.

There's tremendous scope for just messing around in this game too. You can hurl patients out of their beds in a hospital ward, agitate gorillas (really) and use your psychic powers in a variety of different ways to effect a standoff with the enemy.

Single guards, for example, after seeing you slam their mates against a wall then throw them into the night sky, will fear you and do a runner – but with back-up they may be less inclined to do so.

It's little details like this that Free Radical are sure will keep the experience feeling rich enough to warrant replaying the game.

SIGHTSEEING

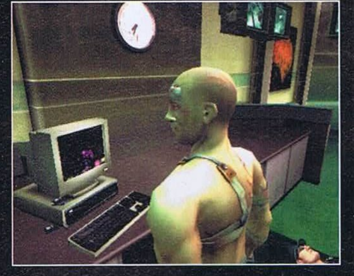
Of course, all these little tricks would be pointless if the gameplay driving the game weren't up to much. Thankfully, Free Radical have created a cracking third-person adventure. Particularly admirable is the absence of any camera issues. You can switch at will between *Resi*-style 'fixed' cameras that change as a you move through a level.

There's also a more traditional camera that follows you or can be moved freely, and lastly you have the option of using a static first-person view to help with things like aiming weapons accurately.

The missions that we saw are your standard fare of protecting a certain character, infiltrating a particular building or installation, gunning down the enemy or reaching a certain area or item – playing in squads, pairs or on your own. However, while the goal of each mission is fairly rigid there's a great deal of freedom in the way you go about doing this.

LOGGING ON

Second Sight's **levels are full of smart little touches for you to seek out and interact with. Some amusing, some quite subtle and other that are genuinely helpful to your progress…**



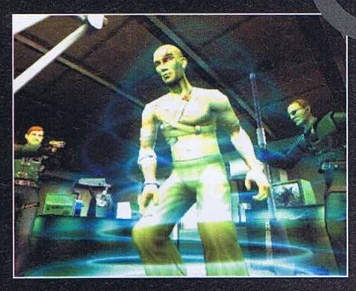
Use one of the computers dotted around the levels to find cheeky little bonuses and helpful features.



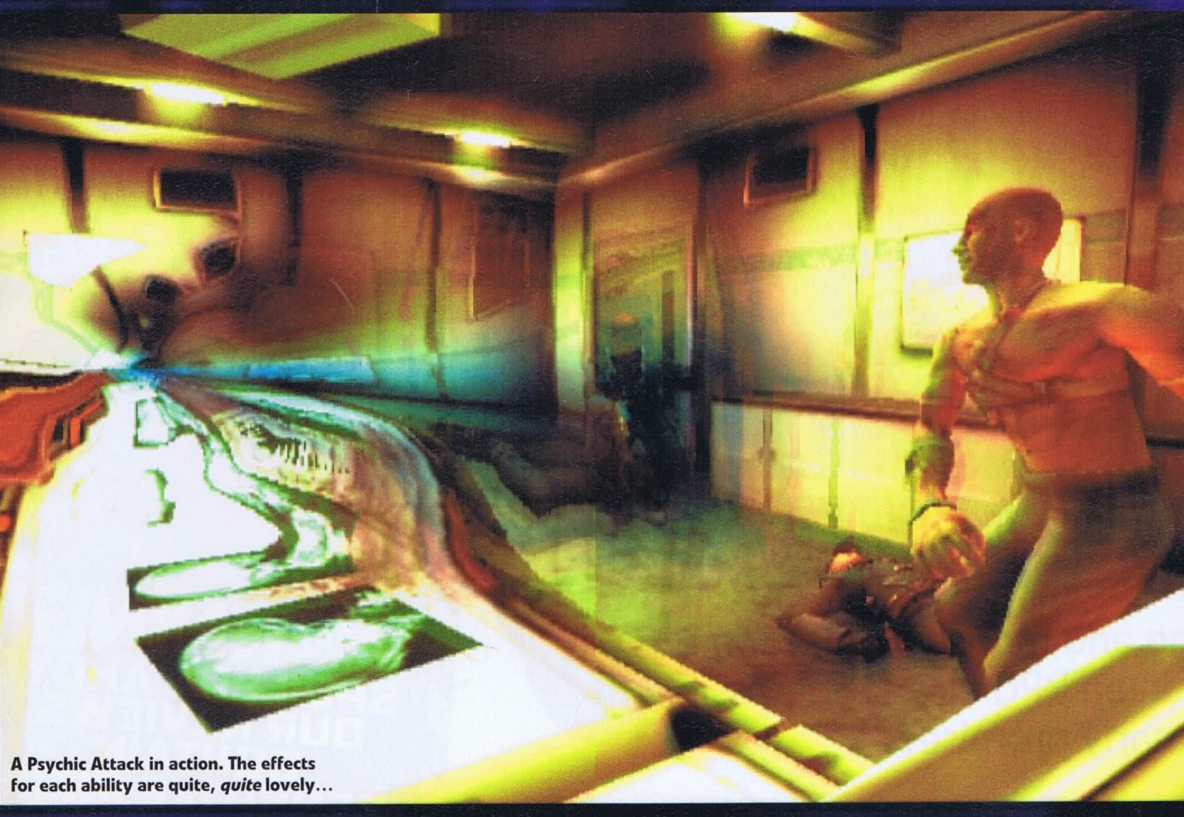
These range from amusing gags like guards chatting about rubbish on forums and message boards…



…to the ability to take control of cameras, allowing you to see objectives and enemy positions.



Some guards get alerted to your activities and look for you if they spot cameras moving suspiciously.



A Psychic Attack in action. The effects for each ability are quite, *quite* lovely…

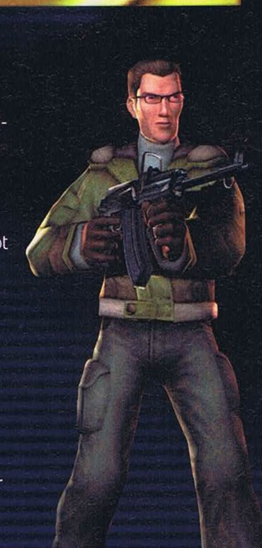
"We haven't gone for the traditional 'easy – normal – hard' difficulty settings this time around. We want the player to decide how hard or how easy they want to make the game for themselves as and when they reach certain situations," Doak promises, "and we don't want to punish players for trying things differently."

In one level you have to infiltrate a building without being seen while your partner for the mission waits outside. "Now, if you alert the guards here, they'll all steam outside and attack the other character." In most games your friend's subsequent mashing would be the end of the mission, but in *Second Sight* there's no such punishment. "If you make that mistake, you *can* rush outside, take everyone on and protect the guy. It's difficult – but it *is* possible". In comparison to games where putting a foot wrong nearly always means pausing the action and hitting 'replay' to start again this is encouraging stuff.

"YOU CAN SWITCH AT WILL BETWEEN RESIDENT EVIL -STYLE 'FIXED' CAMERAS"

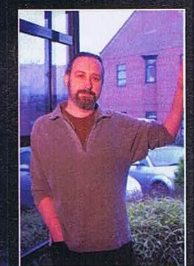
From what we've seen, *Second Sight* has everything you could want from an action game. Blood-splattered violence. An inventive, gripping and involving storyline. The chance to make genuine, gameplay-affecting choices. And a set of intriguing abilities that not only differentiate the game from the flood of third-person games currently available but really enhance the playing experience.

With so many high-quality third-person action adventures like *Beyond Good and Evil* and *Prince of Persia* falling by the wayside sales-wise recently, it would be a shame to see another excellent game suffer the same fate. Free Radical, however, are confident that their latest effort will do very well… N



THE BOYZ











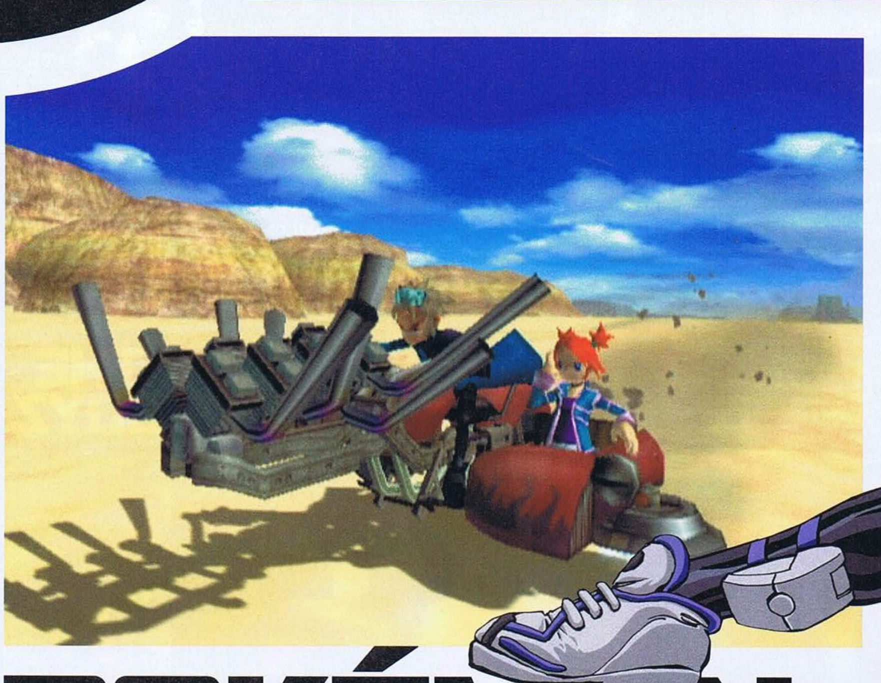
Thanks to Free Radical Directors David Doak and Steve Ellis, along with Project Manager Martin Wakely and Team Leader Mike Armstrong for taking time out to show us the game and letting us invade their office. And take pictures of them eating lunch.

OUR PROMISE

Our reviewers are the most talented and knowledgeable Nintendo fans in the business. We don't only play games at work – we play them at home too, just like you. We ensure that we've played games through to the end so that we can give you a proper verdict – and one that saves you from wasting money.

NGC THE VERDICT YOU DESERVE!

REVIEWS



POKÉMON COLOSSEUM

Fierce fighting and monster collecting wrapped up in an RPG – can this possibly live up to its early promise? P42

WARNING! SPOILERS AHOY! OUR REVIEWS CONTAIN SENSITIVE INFO!



MISSION IMPOSSIBLE OPERATION SURMA

Ethan Hunt's latest excursion redeems the *Mission: Impossible* series somewhat. P52



SCOOBY DOO MYSTERY MAYHEM

Scooby DON'T. Tediously devoid of mayhem, the only mystery is why you'd buy it. P56



CUSTOM ROBO

Make a robot. Fight other robots. Win bits. Make more robots. Sounds like fun! P66

GBA REVIEWS...

HOW IT WORKS...

Our reviews are the most comprehensive on Earth. We devote more pages to the games you want to know about, and give you loads of detail. We don't rest until we've played a game enough to pinpoint ALL of its strengths and weaknesses, and be able to deliver the most honest, no-nonsense verdicts around.





THE LEGEND OF ZELDA FOUR SWORDS +

What's your favourite colour? Blue Link? Traditional green Link? Go-faster red Link, or maybe Pinkydink? It doesn't matter, because in this frenzied funfest you take charge of all four pixie-types.

P44

OUR SCORING SYSTEM

0-24
Crushingly awful, massively dull. Rest assured, this game is crud.

25-49
A disappointing title, stashed with nasty faults and likely to be short on any quality.

50-74
Some great bits, some not-so-great bits. Decent but definitely problems.

75-89
Great fun, brilliantly programmed at times, but probably flawed.

90+
Rarely awarded, a 90+ is essential. Buy with confidence.

NGC STAR GAME

THE SCORE BAR

The verdict explained for you...

PROS AND CONS
Because we think it's important to provide you with balanced reviews, we'll sum up the game simply with some quick plus and minus points.

IF YOU LIKE THIS...
Not all games are good (unsurprisingly) – so you'll be wanting to know what the alternative is. We'll provide suitable suggestions here.

VISUALS AND SOUNDS
Gamecube sends PS2 packing. Do the visuals and sounds show this?

MASTERY
How well does the game make use of the Gamecube's startling hardware?

LIFESPAN
Will it last you a lifetime or a couple of minutes? This is where you'll find out for sure…

VERDICT
We don't throw scores around – we give a game what it deserves. Here you will find the definitive verdict as to whether you should bother purchasing a game.



+
- Nice to see the old sod again.
- He does anything we ask him.

–
- Has a dark side.
- Stars. Stars. Stars. Stars. Stars. Stars. Stars. Stars. Stars.



IF YOU LIKE THIS...
Baldy's Pate
Bickhamsoft
NGC/88, 100%
Platformer in which a shiny-headed chap uses the glare to kill a drove of pigmen.



3 VISUALS
All those years in Germany didn't help his dress sense.

9 SOUNDS
Entertaining rants and raves, plus a big helping of wit.

10 MASTERY
He knows his onions from his O'Nions, that's for sure.

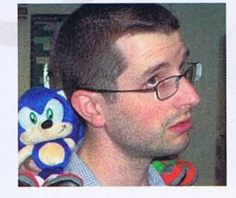
8 LIFESPAN
When you think it's all over, he comes back yet again.

VERDICT
Greener's Return is keeping us all entertained, but can it maintain the standard of the first month?

NGC **64**

MEET THE NGC TEAM

You can trust these people. (But not Geraint with memory cards…)



MARCUS
Announcement: Can the owner of a red Vauxhall Astra Merit, registration G004Y 200L please remove it. Cheers!



PAUL
Announcement: Would the old lady who said Paul should 'never lose his sparkle' get in touch? He's just lost it. The dumbass.



KITTSY
Announcement: There is no point. There is only ape.



GERAINT
Announcement: Bad teeth chew action scats up your memory cards reeeal nice. Try nibbling on some fatty bacon instead.



MIM
Announcement: If deciding to wash your hair in the lav, take the Bloo block out first. But leave your Peach-style tiara ON. Clear?



EFFY
Announcement: If about to receive punishment from Paul Edwards, chow down on a fat tube of something 'boardy. And try to relax.

"People just can't get enough"



INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	NINTENDO
DEVELOPER	NINTENDO
RELEASE DATE	14TH MAY
PLAYERS	1-4
MEM. CARD PAGES	48
GBA LINK-UP	YES
SURROUND SOUND	NO
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£40



△ You find your lady-friend trussed up in a cloth bag. Kinky.



△ And here you are riding in the desert on your mono-wheeled hover-bike-thing – the kind of contraption that Ash Ketchum would never even dream of stealing.



△ It pays to explore all areas for handy item boxes like these.



△ Our treasured Slugma giving it some with the flamethrower.



△ Whoever dreamed up this dancing freak should be shot.



△ A Zigzagoon gets a nasty bite from our Umbreon. Ooch!

POKÉMON COLOSSEUM

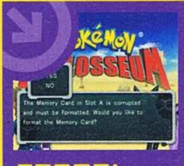
Explore the world of Pokémon like never before…



You'd have thought this whole Pokémon business would have died a death by now wouldn't you? Five years ago the games started their world-dominating rampage and they continue to sell by the truckload. The original *Red* and *Green* games (now in glorious GBA-o-vision) have already shifted two million copies. People, it would seem, just can't get enough. But at the same time, people can't always get what they want – if you ask any Pokémon fan what they want (what they really, *really* want) they'll undoubtedly say a 'proper' Pokémon RPG. An all-new story. A more 'mature' cast. A Pokémon game in glorious 3D and, moreover, a game that doesn't involve spending your time walking through grass looking for random encounters. Or running home to your mum.

"NINTENDO, FOR ONCE, KNOW WHAT YOU WANT. THEY'VE PEERED INTO YOUR DREAMS"

Nintendo, for once, know what you want. They've peered into your dreams and this time, they've been more than happy to deliver…



ERROR! ERROR!

*We're compelled to write this while seething. Third-party memory cards don't seem to work with Colosseum – not one, but TWO of **NGC**'s have been corrupted during the course of this review. That's 100s of hours of gaming. Wiped out. We recommend using ONLY first-party cards with this.*



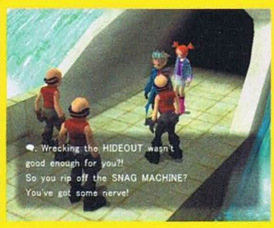
△ Ooh, it's like Halloween. Except without the pumpkins and the egg-throwing hoodlums banging on your door for sweets.

YOU TALKIN' TO ME?

Take a good look – you're going to be seeing them a lot more…



Ah yes, the old trainer battles. Just like the ones in the GBA games, expect to face off against identikit trainers who initiate battles as soon as you're spotted.



The trainer battles make up a good 80% of the RPG mode. They're used to further the game's plot and trigger events that allow you to progress further.



Naturally, it's worth fighting everyone you can find who's up for a battle. Mainly because they have snaggable Shadow Pokémon and give you valuable EXP.



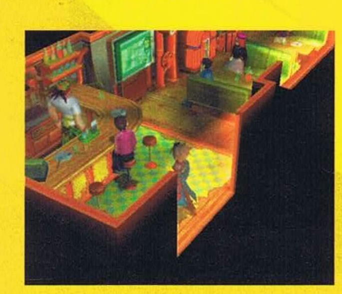
Because there's no grass for you to trigger random encounters in, you can battle certain trainers as often as you like to help build up your team's strength.



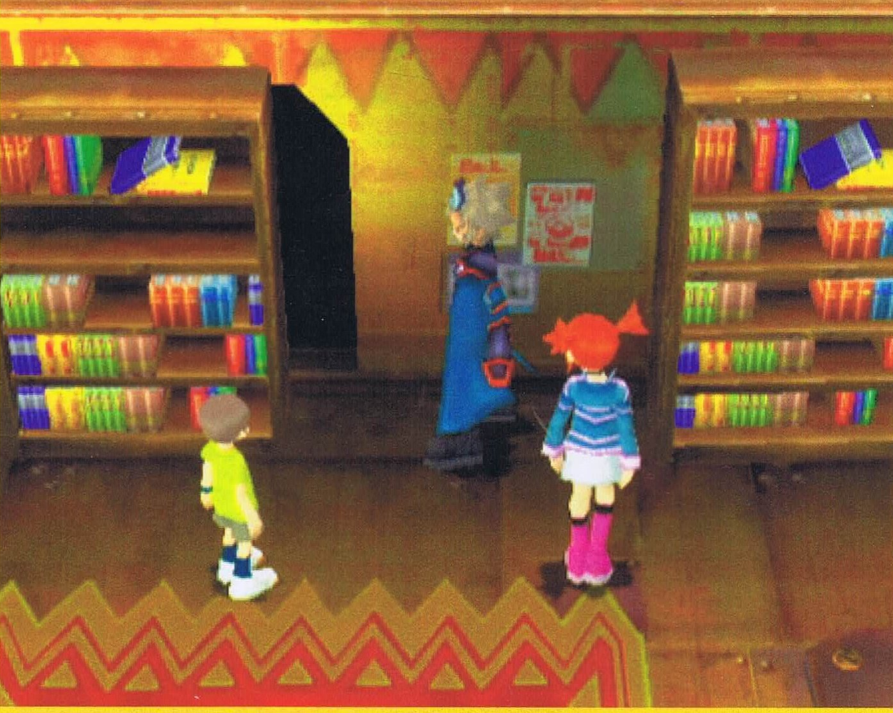
All the battles that you find in the game are two-on-two, which makes sharing EXP and building up your weaker Pokémon a much quicker process than on GBA.



△ ***Colosseum* isn't shy with the neon light shows**



△ **Get your Pokéballs at the bar in the desert outpost.**



△ **Behind here there's a room full of kids that this cretin is supposed to be guarding. One push of this bookcase and their cover is well and truly blown. "Nice work there pal – that's some quality security".**



Okay, so maybe Nintendo haven't exactly been peering into your dreams. That would be just plain *wrong*. But, as you no doubt know by now, they *have* delivered a 3D adventure to sit alongside the more 'traditional' Battle Stadium.

Previously, the stadium battles made up the bulk of the action in the N64 games. This time it really plays second fiddle to the RPG. This, then, is the most important aspect of *Colosseum* and so it's with the RPG that we'll kick off the review.

The single-player RPG mode begins with your main character double-crossing 'Team Snaggem', an organisation that he used to be a part of. Before he blows their base to smithereens, he steals a device that the team have been abusing – a machine that allows them to steal Pokémon from other trainers.

After the opening intro you're taken to a tiny desert outpost to begin your adventure. Here you'll find a bunch of NPC's to chat to and, just before leaving the area you'll be given a quick, easy battle that serves as the game's tutorial.

Initial impressions from this opening section are good. It's immediately evident that this isn't quite the happy, cutesy *Pokémon* you've grown accustomed to on your Game Boy. The lead character is older, to start with. He's certainly more fashion-conscious and is undoubtedly more than capable of holding his own in a bar-room

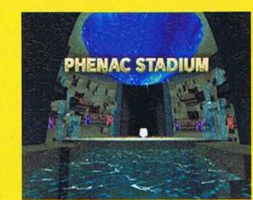


FREE MEMORY

As an antidote to the previous third-party memory card note, we've learned that Nintendo are going to release Pokemon Colosseum with a free Memory Card 59 – just like in Japan. Being a first-party card, we're sure it'll still be going strong after 20+ hours of play on the game it comes with…

DID YOU KNOW? The Japanese version of *Pokémon Crystal* boasted a rather smart and unique feature – mobile phone compatibility. No such luck for us in the rest of the world.













△ One of the nicer areas in the game. It's here that you'll be able to free your Shadow Pokémon from the evil purple mist.

△ "Probably hiding up your sleeves by the looks of things… you freak…"



△ Oooh! Bubble Beam! Can it really get any more exciting than this? CAN IT?!

JOY OF DEX

This personal organiser allows you to view all the pokémon you've seen and snagged. It also lets you receive email from anyone you've traded numbers with, helping you keep tabs on what's going on.





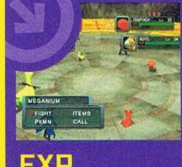


brawl than Ash Ketchum ever was. A good start then.

EASY RIDER

On leaving the starting outpost you're whisked off to an overworld map. So no, this isn't a free-roaming game-world, instead it's broken up into a number of locations linked to a map. Leave the area and any accessible towns and points of interest are highlighted in red. Selecting one of them initiates a little cut-scene of you riding across the desert on your bike.

Unlike the GBA versions there's none of this 'Route 104' business. You don't have to physically walk to the towns and, as a result, you don't have to wade through grass fighting wild Pokémon. *Colosseum* works in an entirely different way.



EXP PLEASE

It's a shame you can't earn EXP in the stadium. Okay, so it would mean you'd level up your favourite 'mon really quickly, but it would help take the tedium out of repetitive training. Maybe they could have awarded EXP to sub-LV 50 'mon only? With over 300 different critters to raise, it's only fair.

Thanks to the Snag Machine (the device that allows Pokéballs to capture Pokémon during trainer battles), the only way to capture Pokémon is to fight the hundreds of NPCs found in all the different towns. It's a change of playing style that's very welcome. True, there are times when you have no choice whether to battle or not – but on the whole, if you don't want to battle quite so often, you don't have to. It's quite a dramatic restructuring for a *Pokémon* adventure, made even more refreshing by the importance of a proper 'story'. There *have* been some story elements in the GBA games but they haven't been as significant as they are in *Colosseum*. This time it's the driving force behind the adventure. While catching Pokémon is of great importance, the game really revolves around solving the mystery of the Shadow Pokémon, and bring those responsible for creating them to justice.

"THE ONLY WAY TO CAPTURE ANY POKÉMON IS TO FIGHT THE HUNDREDS OF NPCS"

Now, as welcome as it is to have some kind of

"Engage in trainer battle after trainer battle"



KEEP TO THE SHADOWS

There's something evil afoot in the world of Pokémon! Innocent critters have been kidnapped and turned into 'killing machines' – so, er, what's changed then?



As we said before, there are no wild Pokémon in *Colosseum*. Instead you have to capture them in trainer battles in the usual way.



Your female companion is the key to spotting the ideal ones to nab. When a battle is initiated she'll tell you which monster to go for.



Snagged Pokémon start off with one move – Shadow Blast. It never misses and does a fixed amount of damage. It's not all bad, though…



As a battle runs its course, Shadow Pokémon can go into Hyper mode, a state where Shadow Blast is far more likely to score a critical hit.



Shadow Pokémon have two main weaknesses. They can't level up and, when in Hyper mode, they won't obey you.



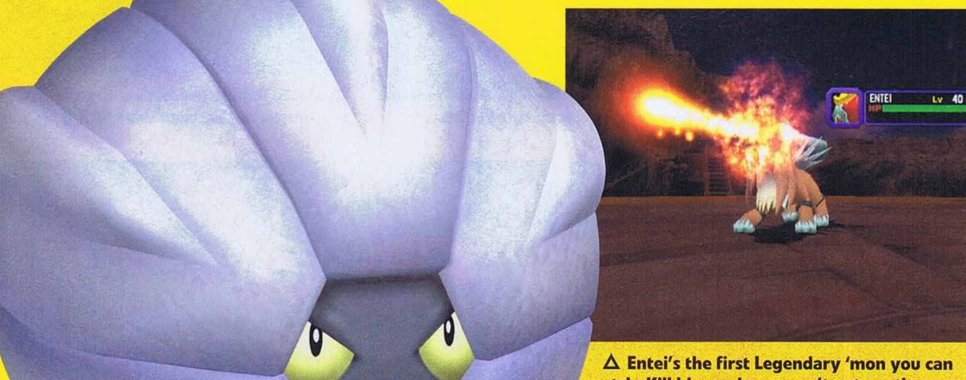
In order to free them from their darkness you have to keep them in your active battling party. This will reduce a meter, slowly opening their hearts.



Once the meter's been depleted, take them to the forest in Agate. Here they'll have the restrictive Shadow removed from their hearts and…



…in a rather nice touch, will be able to use all the EXP they've been secretly storing up, gaining multiple levels in one go. You little beauty!



△ Entei's the first Legendary 'mon you can catch. Kill him and you won't get another go.



△ Hotels are one way you can rest up your battered Pokémon – for 100 monies a night.

'plot', it is also, unfortunately, *Colosseum's* biggest problem. The RPG is just too damn linear. If you're expecting something as absorbing, involving or, indeed, *entertaining* as the GBA or GBC games then you won't find it here. There are no side quests. No minigames. Nothing to divert you from the rigid path the game forces you down. You're there simply to watch the pre-scripted events unfold while battling trainer after trainer after trainer in order to snag as many Shadow Pokémon as you can along the way. There's never anything particularly clever going on. You can engage in trainer battle after trainer battle (against the same opponent sometimes) to build up your Pokémon's strength, and there are often errands that need running (like finding a cog wheel for a windmill to turn on the power in a town), but aside from those all-too-basic tasks that's all there is to it.

> **"THERE'S NOTHING TO DIVERT YOU FROM THE RIGID PATH THE GAME FORCES YOU DOWN"**

POKÉ-MOAN

Yup, it's more than a little disappointing. In reality, if you take the trainer battles out of the equation, the RPG mode would barely last ten hours. If that.

That's not to say the game isn't interesting. It is and it's enjoyable *enough* and entertaining *enough* to *just about* satisfy everyone's need for a 3D adventure. However, it's abundantly clear that Nintendo haven't lavished anywhere near as much love and affection on the game's design as they have on other games like *The Legend of*

KEEPING IT LOCAL

What do 'I still need seasoning', 'You're some kind of strong' and 'We're gunning our engines' have in common? They're all examples of the sporadically rancid localisation we've seen in the game. As a wise trainer once said… 'Fufufufufu'. Well, quite. Rubbish.

DID YOU KNOW? Meowth is the only Pokémon that can say anything other than its own name. It's fitting, then, that in *Colosseum* his voice sample is reduced to a "Gneeblurp". Genius.




△ Flaaffy's evolution animation in action – and a sickly old Pikachu getting his face punched in.



△ A Geodude gets the full force of our Bayleef's razorleaf attack. With super-effective results.



△ Some attacks require your Pokémon to be as happy as can be for the best effects. In which case, take them to this old crone.



△ There are plenty of tournaments to enter…



△ …and special battles to fight for extra items.

△ The mutant love-child of 'Free' Willy and Darth Maul. Frightening, by all accounts.

MISSING IN ACTION

FOR AN UPDATE OF A SERIES, QUITE A LOT HAS DISAPPEARED…



Yeah, the RPG is a nice addition – but it seems it's been at the expense of some of the original Stadium features on N64. To start with, the Campus-style presentation and, with it, that feeling of being in a kind of Olympic village. As a result many of the smart little extras have also vanished. Remember the Pokémon Academy? That excellent little quiz-based minigame and Pokémon information resource that you could waste hours in just looking at detailed stats? Well it's gone.How about those cracking little four player minigames that, again, proved highly amusing in their own right? Well, guess what? Yup. Gone. How about the Pokémon Lab with all its holographic displays and info on nesting sights and TMs? Er… gone as well. Surely the GB Tower is still there, though? Letting you battle and train up your 'mon at high speed in a Game Boy emulator? Funnily enough folks, that's gone too… Is it just us or do you get the feeling that not *quite* as much effort went into this as you'd have liked. Hmmm.

Zelda: The Wind Waker or *Super Mario Sunshine*.

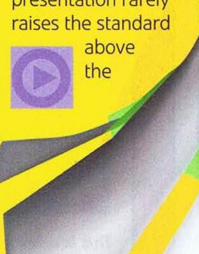
The presentation, for example, while not exactly terrible, is a little lacking in places. While the environments are, admittedly, rather nice in places, with some quite lovely backgrounds and settings, the character models, especially on some of the trainers, aren't particularly great. The sounds the Pokémon make have barely evolved from the ones they made on the game's Game Boy predecessors and the animation on the monsters themselves are a little inconsistent, with some monsters boasting lovely death and attack animations, while others are distinctly unexciting.

Obviously it's nice to see your Pokémon rendered in 3D, but we can't help but feel as though more could have been done to inject personality, life and charisma into Nintendo's cherished monster menagerie. The overall presentation rarely raises the standard above the



RUMBLE

We're a little bit miffed that the monsters still don't actually 'fight'. You never see any actual contact. Imagine is you actually saw Jigglypuff sink his teeth into Pikachu's back. With the resulting spurts of blood. Now that dear reader, would qualify for **NGC***'s first ever 100% award. Oh yes.*



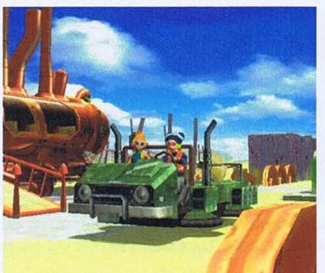


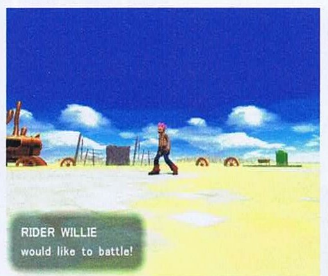
DRY DRY DESERT

The game all takes place in the new Orre region of the Pokémon World – a harsh, barren desert wasteland with just a few outposts of civilisation…

OUTSKIRT CITY

Not really a ‘city’ as such. More of a ‘train’.

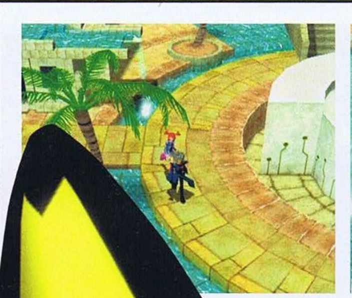


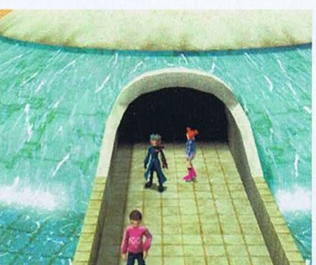


This is where your adventure really kicks off. After blowing up Team Snaggem’s hideout and running off with their Snag Machine you escape to this outpost. There’s nothing much here apart from a rusty train-cum-bar that has a bunch of NPCs (against one of whom you will fight your first trainer battle). It’s most notable for being the only place in the game that you can buy Pokéballs.

PHENAC CITY

Welcome to paradise…





An oasis with streams running through it. There’s an Academy, a Pre-Gym – an excellent place to get some practice in – and a Colosseum for competitions. The town’s mayor seems friendly, but we can’t help feeling he’s a bit dodgy…

MOUNT BATTLE

Talk about having an uphill struggle…



This is the site of your first properly difficult trainer battle. A gang of thugs have taken over the area – a chain of ten metal platforms each guarded by a trainer, increasing in difficulty at each stage. The final platform pits you against a massive opponent with a nasty bunch of Pokémon at his disposal, including the Legendary Entei who’s yours for the snagging. If he doesn’t burn you to a crisp first.



CONSTRUCTION LOT

Building for the future…

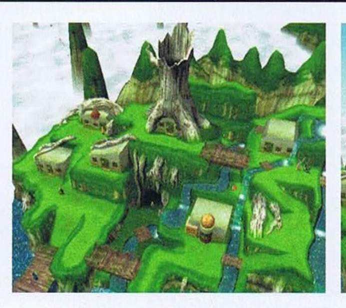


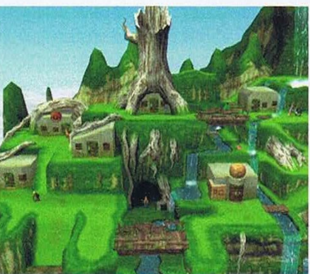


This is the third place you’ll visit – a whopping five-by-five inches of explorable screen space for you to ‘go nuts’ in. Great. It’s most noteworthy for the colossal tower that you see in the distance. Some rich bloke has paid squillions for a luxury battle stadium to be erected in the desert. We reckon it won’t be too long before it’s finished either…

AGATE VILLAGE

If you go down to the woods today…





This is where your female companion’s grandfather lives. An ageing Pokémon trainer, he tries to stop your enemy’s attempts to destroy a shrine hidden away in a forest here by using a solitary, pitifully weak Pikachu. Once you’ve shamed him with your super-powerful team of Shadow Pokémon, you can purge the darkness from their souls. Which is nice.

DID YOU KNOW? Waaaay back in the day, when N64 magazine first caught a whiff of Pokémon from Japan, we knew very little about what was going on. So little that we thought Pikachu was a dog. Fact.

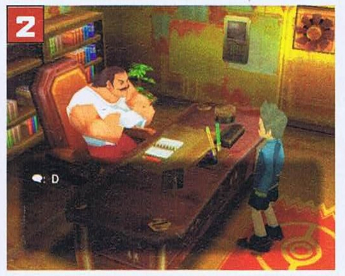
PYRITE TOWN

It'll be Pokéballs at dawn if those hoodlums get their way…

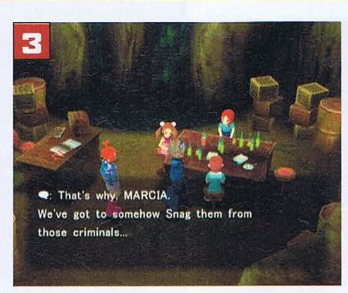
HOW TO... Bring peace to the people.



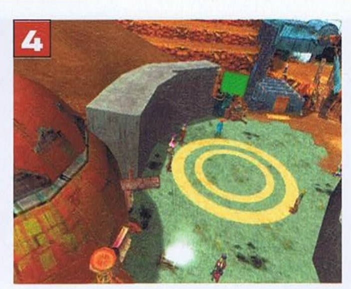
Pyrite town has a distinct 'Wild West' kind of feel to it. It's a lawless backwater town. A run-down, dusty old place where hoodlum trainers have taken over.



Even the town's Gym Leader is in a spot of bother. The evil Snaggems have kidnapped his precious Pokémon, Plusle, leaving him powerless against the scum coming into town.



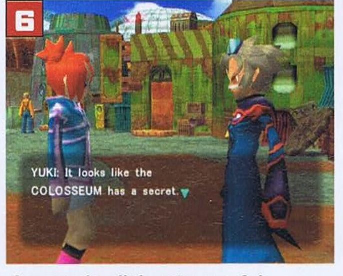
All this bullying is getting on the nerves of some kids he's got hidden away behind a bookcase. They're sick of the Gym Leader getting bullied – so it's time for some action.



Head on over to the town's street battle area. There are a bunch of wasters hanging around just dying to have their shadow pokémon stolen for your personal pleasure.



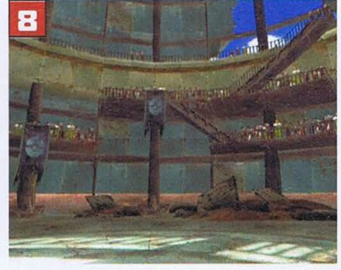
It seems these Shadow Pokémon belong to the bloke responsible for most of the trouble in this place – 'Miror B', a gangly weirdo in a yellow jumpsuit, with a penchant for dancing.



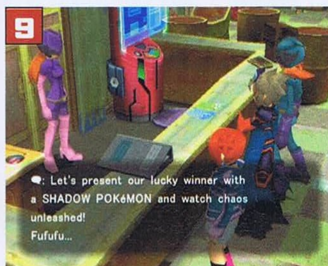
Apparently, all the winners of the challenge at the local Pokémon Stadium receive one of these Shadow Pokémon as their reward – thus spreading their evil around the world.



Heading over to the Stadium to compete, though, you discover that someone's turned off the power to it by stealing a cog from the windmill's generator. It needs to be returned.



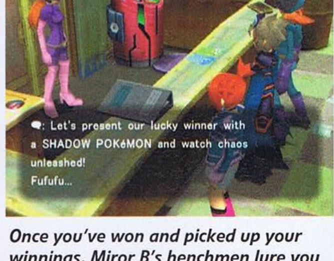
When you've got the power back on it's time to head to the Pokémon Stadium. It's a pretty shabby old dump, to be honest, and all the trainers you face there are pretty useless.



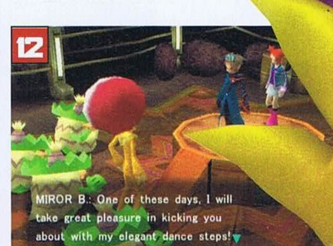
Once you've won and picked up your winnings, Miror B's henchmen lure you to their hideout's reception desk for a little gift. Time for a trainer battle marathon, then.



One you've fought your way to the top of the building, you'll find the cave entrance to Miror B's hideaway, a mine-like area that's riddled with trainers.



At the end of this maze you'll find Miror B dancing around like a loon with a bunch of Ludicolos. Beat him off with your snagged Pokémon to free the Gym Leader's Pokémon.



Freedom for the town at last! Miror B does a runner and a very grateful Gym Leader lets us have his rescued Plusle – a pitifully weak specimen we abandoned in PC storage. Alone.

A LINK TO THE VAST

Want to know how all that GBA linkery-pokery works? Well, look no further than this handy bunch of bite-sized informations…



■ Colosseum mode is where all the main link-up action takes place, with the first step requiring you to register a team of Pokémon.



■ In order to do this, you need to save your GBA game at a Pokémon Centre with your most wanted Pokémon in your main party list.



■ For multiplayer, every person needs a GBA and their own set of Pokémon. One player can use a GC pad and monsters from the RPG mode.



■ For GBA users, attacks and stats are all limited to the GBA screen, which means you can hide your potential attacks from opponents.



■ A word of warning, though. If you use GBA Pokémon in the game's Solo Colosseum battles they need to be fairly strong to stand a chance.

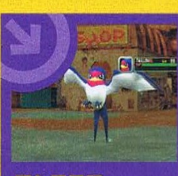


■ It's worth it though. Playing through the Solo mode wins coupons that can be exchanged for prizes that you can then transfer to your GBA.

acceptable and functional, with perhaps the only saving grace being the liberal use of pyrotechnic effects for the individual attacks.

As we said earlier, though, this won't stop you playing and (more importantly) finishing the RPG mode. It's not that we're particularly down on RPG mode, and we certainly wouldn't want to suggest that it's especially bad, but after waiting for so long for a 3D adventure, perhaps it hasn't quite lived up to our lofty expectations.

It does, however, keep you interested from start to finish which, we suppose, is one of the most important factors in the game – because on completion you can trade or export any Pokémon you snagged in the RPG into your GBA game. If you were hoping, as we were, that you could unleash your GBA-based high-level Sceptile or Blaziken on *Colosseum's* unsuspecting trainers, then you're in for a shock. You can only really get jiggy with link-cables and data transfer after you've seen off the RPG's final boss.



BLEEP BLORK!

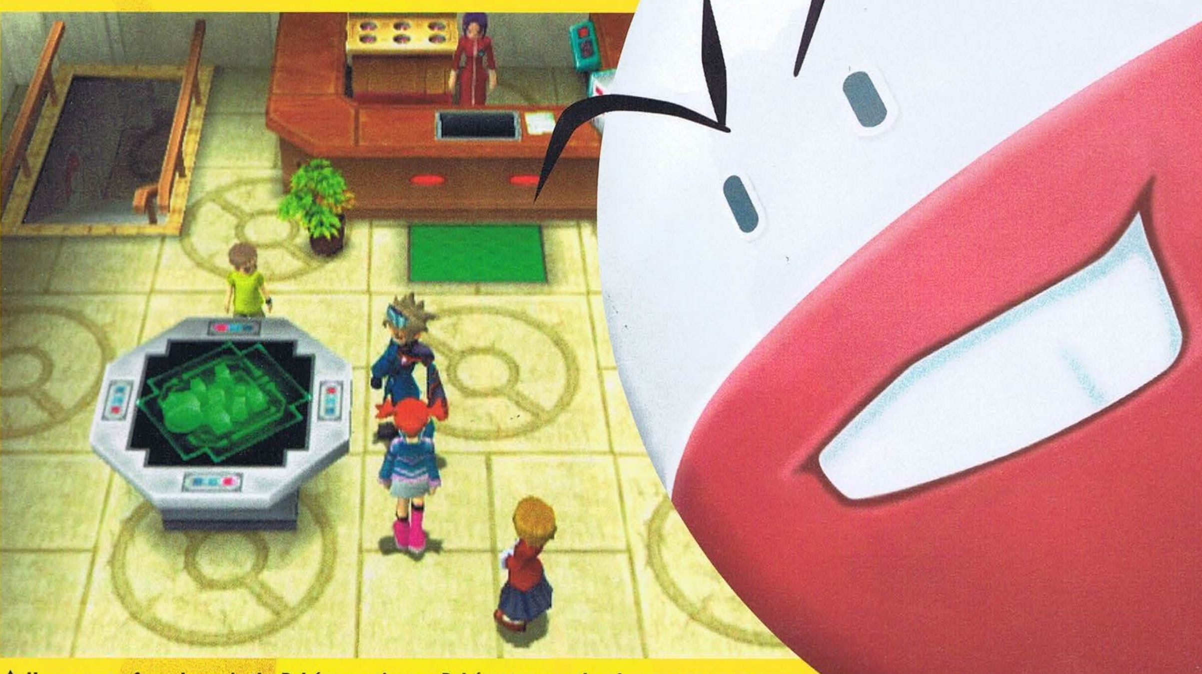
You know when you send out a Pokémon in the GBA games and you get this rubbish GNNNURK noise that's supposed to be its individual 'growl'? Well, guess what? Colosseum's *noises aren't much better, with a pathetic collection of grunts preceding the action. Terrible.*

READY… FIGHT…

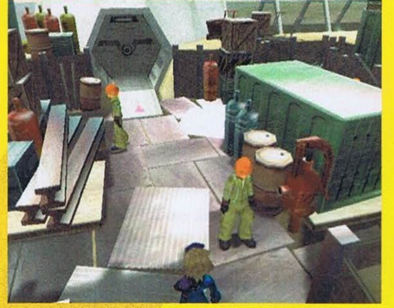
Of course, the RPG mode is only half the story, as once again the Battle Stadium returns for you to pit your GBA-grown monsters against rivals on the big screen. As usual there are solo and multiplayer modes to play through. The biggest difference you'll notice from the N64 predecessors is the 'Pokémon-campus' style presentation for navigating the

POKÉMON COLOSSEUM

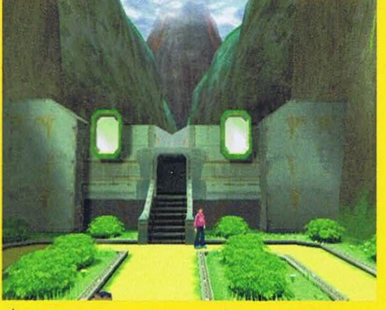
At last – a proper Pokémon RPG!



△ **Home-away-from-home in the Pokémon universe. Pokécenters are the place to save your game, heal your Pokémon and swap that dingy old Diglett for something a bit nastier. Like a Luvdisc.**



△ **It's always worth returning to visit past areas for more plot details and items.**



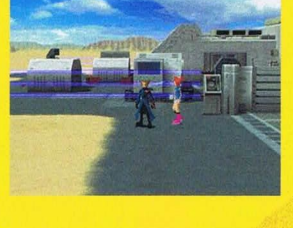
△ **The evil Team Snaggem have taken over Mt Battle, so fight your way to the top.**



△ **The grittier and altogether dirtier atmosphere of the game is a welcome change.**







stadium has now been abandoned in favour of a purely menu-driven system. Again, this is a touch disappointing, but something that's more than made up for by the sheer size and challenge available in the Battle mode. Interestingly, this mode was the one that interested us the least initially. But once the RPG element has been seen off, it's here that you'll spend most of your time and it's here that you'll find the game's lasting appeal. You can configure battles to match anybody's ability or playing style. You can customise a battle's rules, limit usable moves, indulge in a free-for-all, set up team battles – whatever you desire. If you've played the GBA versions and have carefully bred and raised a substantial amount of Pokémon, this mode will run and run for months. The drawback is that if you don't own the GBA games then the appeal of this section is limited. Also, in a particularly cruel turn of events 'Rental Pokémon' are not as readily available as they once were. There are Rental Pokémon of sorts, but they're picked at random when you choose 'Battle Now' mode – a quick one-off battle. You can't enter any of the main Colosseum competitions and challenges unless you have registered Pokémon from your GBA game. That said, if you haven't touched the GBA games then we doubt *Pokémon Colosseum* will feature highly on your list of potential buys anyway.

Despite our initial misgivings, *Colosseum* – seen as one game rather than two disparate modes – offers a *colossal* amount of fun for the hardened enthusiast, and if you consider both GC and GBA Pokémon games as one glorious whole, you'll be hard pushed to find a more complex, absorbing and engaging title.

GERAINT EVANS

"CONFIGURE BATTLES TO MATCH ANYBODY'S ABILITY OR PLAYING STYLE"

BEATEN?

Think you finished the main adventure? Think again – there are actually plenty more extras to discover and trainer battles to get through (but we won't spoil that for you). You can even go back to previous battles to get some (not all) pokémon that you think you may have missed first time. Phew.



- It's got a 3D RPG!
- Pokémon in 3D!
- Absolutely loads to get stuck into. In 3D.



- Only worth it if you have GBA games.
- You need to *love* Pokémon.



IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Skies Of Arcadia Legends.
Atari
NGC/81 90%
No Pokémon, but plenty of turn-based battles.



7 VISUALS
Mostly functional, but with some lovely environments.

7 SOUNDS
Some nice music, shame about the rubbish Pokémon FX

8 MASTERY
Fair presentation, but hugely complex gameplay.

9 LIFESPAN
Fans won't tire of the Stadium until this time next year.

VERDICT

Not quite the RPG epic we expected, but it's enjoyable and the Colosseum mode will last till the end of time.



84



DID YOU KNOW? The name of the guy who invented *Pokémon* was Satoshi Tajiri. He was 24 years old when he dreamt up the concept. At school, his fellow pupils called him Dr Bug.

"Bumping off a contract killer"



△ The opening FMV features a suitably ridiculous set-up.

△ Hide in the shadows and take a dump. Maybe.

△ Sneak up behind someone and you can do a stealth attack.

△ A fetching view of an evil henchman's back. Natty vest, huh?

△ You don't have to be too accurate to score a shot. As long as the targeting reticule turns red instead of blue then you're home free.

INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	ATARI
DEVELOPER	PARADIGM
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW
PLAYERS	1
MEM. CARD PAGES	4
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	YES
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£40



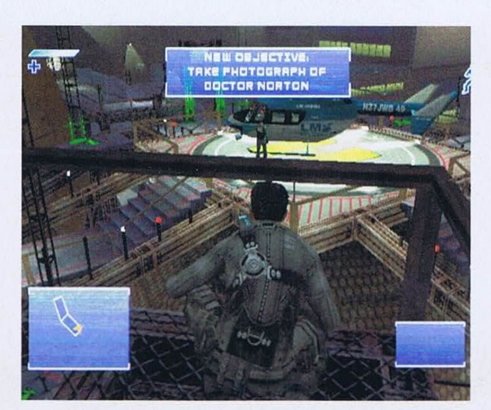
△ If he hasn't seen you by now, he's one dumb guard. Luckily you come out fighting with fists a-flying.



△ The easiest way to stop metal detectors detecting your heavy-duty ordnance is to go straight over them. Clever, no?



△ Simply squatting there isn't going to help, is it? Best get a wriggle on, old son, and find a way out.



△ The zoom on your binoculars is so powerful that it's quite easy to get a snap of whoever you need to photo.



△ The laser cutter is a context-sensitive bit of kit; holding down Y will deploy whatever gadget's needed.

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE OPERATION SURMA

Cast all memories of Ethan Hunt's last dismal outing aside. This is a wealth of stealth in the wake of Snake.

We've got long memories here on **NGC**. It seems like only yesterday that we were steering an awkward-looking Ethan Hunt around the ambassador's party and bumping off a contract killer in the toilets. But that was actually six years ago, and these aren't *fond* memories. Arriving in the wake of *GoldenEye*, the original *Mission: Impossible* on N64 was awkward, ugly and, in trying to capture some of the glamour of that first breathtaking wave of shiny new stealth games (we had *GoldenEye*, PSone had *Metal Gear Solid*), outclassed completely. By the time *Perfect Dark* turned up, fulfilling every last bit of promise it had showed as a *GoldenEye*-beater, Infogrames' effort was nothing more than a clunky also-ran that people had already forgotten. Apart from us, that is.

A lot's changed since then. *Metal Gear Solid*, for instance, has come to Gamecube and Infogrames have turned into Atari. They've got another *Mission: Impossible* game, but although you'd be forgiven for thinking that history is in some way repeating itself, this one isn't a dud. Indeed, in many ways it's jolly good. It's just a shame that it's arrived in the wake of a certain Tactical Espionage Action game from Konami…

Once again you take the role of Ethan Hunt, Mission: Impossibleer and man of stealth. Confusingly, although this chap looks nothing like Tom Cruise, Ving Rhames is along for the ride, reprising his role of Luther Stickell from the movies. Odd. But good, because Ving lends a gravitas and dramatic presence that anchors the otherwise mundane voice-acting.

Aesthetics aside – and the game itself looks good, in a sub-*Splinter*

> "ALMOST GOOD ENOUGH TO ERASE THE DIRTY MEMORIES OF ITS PREDECESSOR"

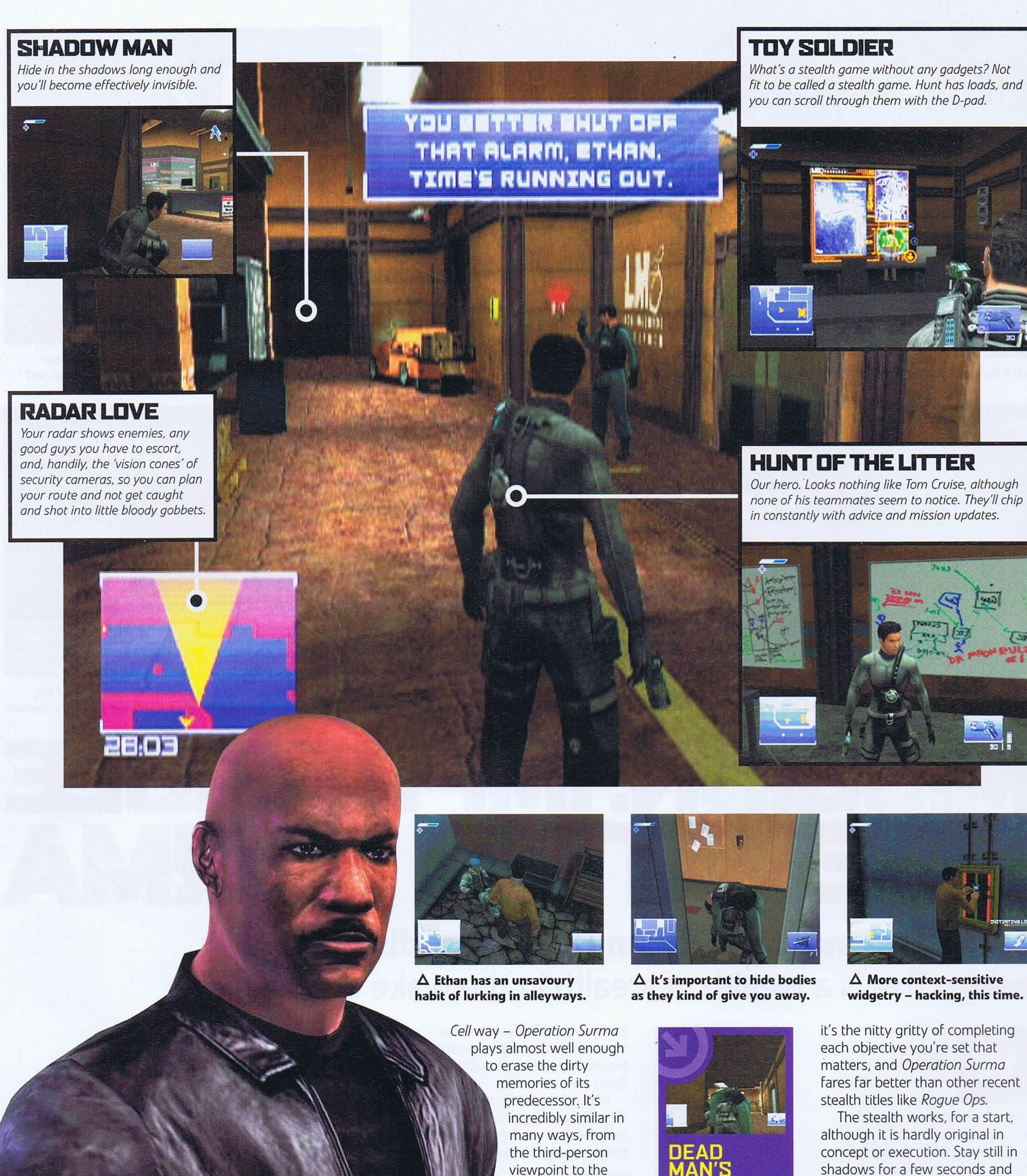


ALARMING

Set off an alarm and it's not necessarily game over. You're given a set amount of time to deactivate the klaxons before guards come running and it's game over. It's a nice touch and ratchets up the tension, although it stretches credulity that nobody get suspicious…

DID YOU KNOW? Mission: Impossible 3 will be released next year. The Cruisester and Rhamester (cough) are both in it and we hope it makes more sense than the previous films.

"Packed to the gunwales with gadgets"



SHADOW MAN
Hide in the shadows long enough and you'll become effectively invisible.

TOY SOLDIER
What's a stealth game without any gadgets? Not fit to be called a stealth game. Hunt has loads, and you can scroll through them with the D-pad.

RADAR LOVE
Your radar shows enemies, any good guys you have to escort, and, handily, the 'vision cones' of security cameras, so you can plan your route and not get caught and shot into little bloody gobbets.

HUNT OF THE LITTER
Our hero. Looks nothing like Tom Cruise, although none of his teammates seem to notice. They'll chip in constantly with advice and mission updates.

△ **Ethan has an unsavoury habit of lurking in alleyways.**

△ **It's important to hide bodies as they kind of give you away.**

△ **More context-sensitive widgetry – hacking, this time.**

Cell way – *Operation Surma* plays almost well enough to erase the dirty memories of its predecessor. It's incredibly similar in many ways, from the third-person viewpoint to the multiple-objective missions, but where the original was clumsy, this is smooth, assured and packed to the gunwales with gadgets and sweet little touches. Naturally there's a complicated story that ties the whole thing together, but it's the nitty gritty of completing each objective you're set that matters, and *Operation Surma* fares far better than other recent stealth titles like *Rogue Ops*.

The stealth works, for a start, although it is hardly original in concept or execution. Stay still in shadows for a few seconds and you'll become hidden. By the same token, you can hide bodies of neutralised guards in the dark. Simple but effective. However, unlike other stealth games, when it comes down to it, fisticuffs *are* an option here – you can knock out simple combos by tapping A, creep up behind someone in order to perform a 'stealth attack', and you can even lurk behind walls and spring out for a surprise uppercut. Unlike in *Splinter Cell*, you're

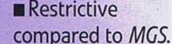
DEAD MAN'S HAND

Despite being straightforward, Surma is full of smart touches. You can grab guards from behind and make them open fingerprint-scanning doors. Even if you've neutralised a bad guy you can haul their prone form over and use their cold hand. Mint.


△ What a lovely view – of both the city and the back of Ethan's head.


△ Ethan's favourite brown leather jacket about to splashed with blood.


- Loads of gadgets.
- Solid stealth gameplay.
- Fisticuffs.


- Handholding.
- Bad camera.
- Restrictive compared to *MGS*.


IF YOU LIKE THIS...

Metal Gear Solid The Twin Snakes
Konami
NGC/91 91%
The daddy of stealth titles. (With *GoldenEye*, natch.)



7 VISUALS
Solid and detailed but lacking in the way of jaw-floor action.

7 SOUNDS
Variable voice acting and *that* theme tune – in many styles.

6 MASTERY
Technically competent, but that camera is awful.

6 LIFESPAN
You can plug away for some time, but you won't replay it.

VERDICT
Accomplished at times, but lacking the flexibility and freedom that makes other stealth games so much fun.

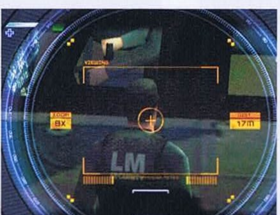




SPIES LIKE US...
...Like to use plenty of hi-tech gadgets. It's a perk of the job, really.

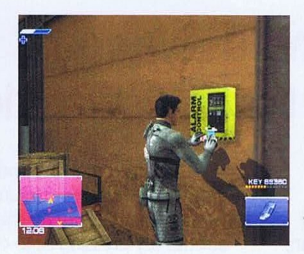

Fed up of pesky cameras recording your every move and setting alarms off? This EWG gun will neutralise them with a blast of electrickery-buggering-jiggery-pokery.


Reminiscent of Perfect Dark's Farsight, despite not being a gun, the Sonic Imager allows you to see through doors in an infra-red stylee in order to detect guards.


Not just good for looking at far-away things; once you've zoomed in on a target you can use the binoculars to take a digital snap. Also includes a handy threat detector. Not bad.


Point this micro cord at a handy pipe or other overhead object and Ethan can winch himself up to it, allowing him to swing like a monkey to an otherwise-unreachable location.


△ He's getting a face full of fist.


△ The easy way to stop alarms.


△ A man falling up some stairs.


△ How to get in that room, eh?

sometimes given a last reprieve if you can fight your way out.

The core gameplay, then, is sound, and it's buttressed by many enjoyable details. The wealth of gadgets provides you with a problem-solving toybox that's mostly tied to a context-sensitive action system. Some widgets – such as the camera-disabling EWG gun – must be deployed manually when you see fit – but many (the laser cutter, for example) are activated by holding Y, your one-size-fits-all action button. The action button's a well-implemented touch and even if you do find yourself, more often than not, running up to locked doors and gates hammering Y just to see if that's the solution, it eliminates the mindless busywork of having to trawl through your inventory and select the less-important gadgets.

Sadly, despite how much it does right, *Operation Surma* doesn't offer the freedom that would make it truly involving. The game is very linear in that every gadget has a pre-ordained use at a certain time and place, and progress through the game is usually a case of figuring out the one thing you have to do next. In this, it's a little like *Splinter Cell*, which was in effect a giant puzzle game, but *Operation Surma* has little of the subtlety of Ubi Soft's game. It's guilty of hand-holding too, especially in the earlier levels, which is fine when it comes to learning the myriad moves and items the game has to offer, but gets irritating later on when your M:I team chip in just when you're about to enjoy working something out for yourself.

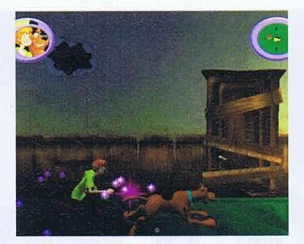
But don't misunderstand us. This is a good, solid outing and is highly enjoyable at times. It's just that, in the wake of *The Twin Snakes*, it seems basic and straightforward.

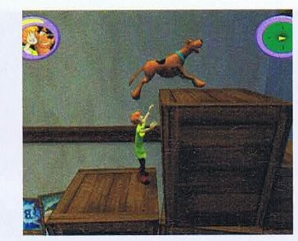
JES BICKHAM

"THE WEALTH OF GADGETS PROVIDES YOU WITH A PROBLEM-SOLVING TOYBOX"

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ANGER
The camera is atrocious and almost spoils all the good work the game does. You can wang it around Ethan with the C-stick, but there's no Zelda-style ability to suddenly centre it behind you, so you spend loads of time manipulating it as you're playing.

DID YOU KNOW? *Mission: Impossible* on N64 scored a rather-high 75% in issue 19 of this fine journal. "Promising, but heavy on faults, and occasionally shabby", we said.

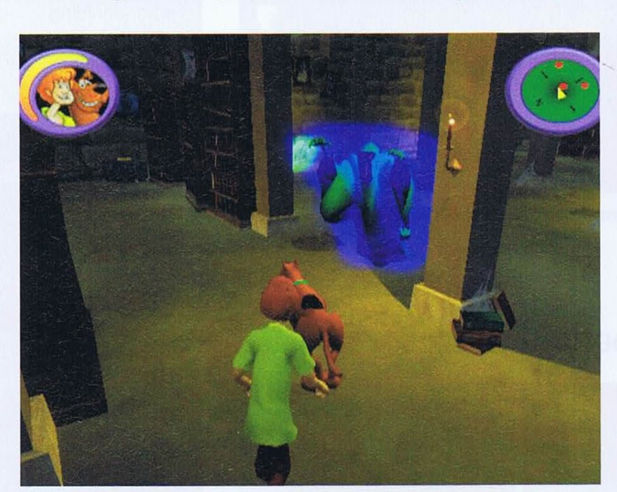

Δ Scooby sets off on the trail of snacks and ghosts. Rooby-roo!


Δ Shaggy chucks his 12-stone monster of a dog onto a ledge.


Δ This game will literally scare the pants off you. Honest.



Δ Inside an actual ghost – or is it a man wearing a blue sheet?


Δ A ghost! Let's avoid it by walking past while spitting peanuts.


Δ Back in Shaggy's Texan home town, this is de rigueur evening wear.

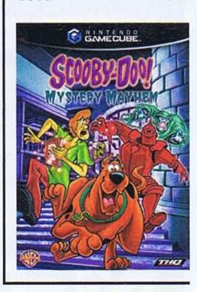
SCOOBY DOO! MYSTERY MAYHEM

The hippy and the hound are back. And they would have gotten away with it if it wasn't for those pesky kids.



INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	THQ
DEVELOPER	A2M
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW
PLAYERS	1
MEM. CARD PAGES	3
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	NO
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	£40





Hands up everyone who wants to play another Scooby Doo game! No, not you – you'll have to wait until you've finished *Jimmy Neutron* first. Don't be so greedy.

If you find yourself with a spare couple of hours, a pocketful of unwanted cash and the uncontrollable urge to play something so insipid, so instantly forgettable that it might as well not exist, here's *Mystery Mayhem*. It's a predictable trudge through a haunted mansion, complete with Scooby staples such as people with sheets over their heads pretending to be ghosts, and people who *look* like they've got sheets over their heads but are actually *real* ghosts.

It almost sounds like fun, until you remember Scooby Doo is nearly as reliable an indicator of Gamecube mediocrity as Batman, Crash Bandicoot or (*whisper it*) Sonic the Hedgehog.

There's simply no justification for a mystery game where every puzzle is solved by pressing the A button. When we say 'puzzle' we mean 'climbing on top of a box' or 'crawling through a gap'. That's about as involving as it gets.

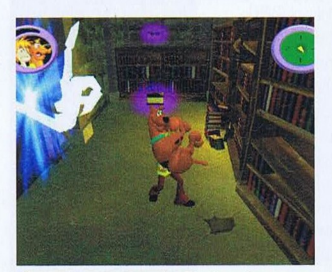
> "SO INSIPID, SO INSTANTLY FORGETTABLE THAT IT MIGHT AS WELL NOT EXIST"

In this epic fight against the forces of boredom you get two characters, Shaggy and Scooby, who are exactly the same to control. The one difference is that despite being much taller and more heavily built than his anaemic hippy master, Scooby can squeeze into the kind of narrow openings that Shaggy can only dream of.

You can combine the characters' abilities (by pressing A) to climb up certain tall objects, but they're completely incapable of walking around a carelessly discarded hostess trolley.

There's no logic to the feeble puzzles and very little fun to be had from this sickly game, but as long as people keep churning out cack like this, we'll happily give it the pasting it deserves.

MARTIN KITTS


Δ A ghostly hand...A giant brown dog...The Gamecube power switch...



- Rat roo, raggy?
- Raggy?
- Rowwwrrrr...
- Roobyroobyroo!



- It's crap.



IF YOU LIKE THIS...
Resident Evil
Capcom
NGC/72 89%
The real deal – survival horror that'll put hairs on your chest. Not for kids.



4 VISUALS
Recognisable characters with fairly poor animation.

4 SOUNDS
A bit of vocals, a bit of forgettable music. You know the score.

3 MASTERY
Formulaic gameplay, but at least it looks like Scooby Doo.

3 LIFESPAN
Lacking in difficulty or any genuine replay value.

VERDICT
Scooby Doo does the *Resi*-lite thing again, and do we care? Nope. Sorry. Not a bit. And neither should you.





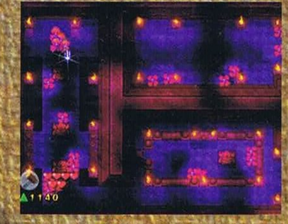


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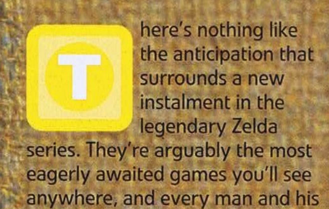




△ Competing for rupees in Tingle's house of perversion. Look, just read the rest of the review, please.

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA FOUR SWORDS +

Link, Ganon and the Seven Sages return to Gamecube, but it probably isn't what you were expecting…



There's nothing like the anticipation that surrounds a new instalment in the legendary Zelda series. They're arguably the most eagerly awaited games you'll see anywhere, and every man and his dog seems to have an opinion on exactly how the thing should turn out. Realistic graphics; a massive overworld; a massive underworld; side-quests; chickens…

People get overexcited about it because everyone who knows games knows that a Zelda title, done properly, is something extraordinary and unforgettable.

But try to find anyone who gives a damn about *Four Swords* and it's a different story.

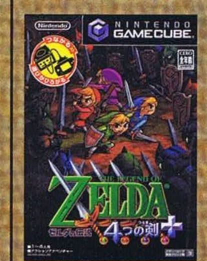
Blame it on the unorthodox graphics. Blame it on the fact that it's billed as an upgrade of a seldom-played bonus mode from the GBA's *Link to the Past*. Blame it on the prohibitively expensive GBA connectivity – we certainly do. You could even blame the way two

> **"HARDLY ANYONE THINKS IT'S ANYTHING OTHER THAN A THROWAWAY NOVELTY"**



INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	NINTENDO
DEVELOPER	NINTENDO
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW
PLAYERS	1-4
MEM. CARD PAGES	3
GBA LINK-UP	YES
SURROUND SOUND	NO
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	¥5,800 (£30)





"The world's greatest game series has just got a brand-new chapter"

△ Did you hear the one about the four swordsmen and the queue at the post office? No? Oh well.

△ Gems (or 'force') in satisfyingly huge numbers.

△ Familiar locations, music and characters. Zelda fans will be right at home in Link's divided new world.

SHADOW BATTLE

You can't beat a bit of Shadow Battle mode for some highly competitive Link-on-Link action. GBAs and link cables are essential requirements.



games which were originally going to be sold separately (*Four Swords* and *Tetra's Trackers*) were hurriedly bundled together, thereby devaluing the whole. If even Nintendo, the company that unashamedly charges £40 for the abysmal *Pokémon Channel*, couldn't justify releasing those titles as standalone games, how insubstantial must they be?

It doesn't matter where you point the finger of suspicion. The only important thing is that the world's greatest game series has just got a brand new chapter, and hardly anybody thinks it's anything other than a throwaway novelty – *Pac-Man Vs* with pixies.

But *Four Swords* is a whole lot more than that. It's a complete Zelda game – without all the usual side-quests or any kind of overworld to speak of, but featuring 24 levels that are effectively miniature dungeons designed for up to four players.



2D NASTY?

The game's visual style may attract a little scorn from certain quarters, but we think it's one of the most beautiful 2D games ever. The super-smooth scaling, the number of sprites on screen and the crisp special effects make it look like nothing else. It's a glorious mix of retro design and state-of-the-art hardware.

BEHIND THE SCENES

While we'll have to wait for the English translation to see if the story is as flimsy as we suspect, we managed to glean at least the basics from the Japanese version. It seems that four evil Shadow Links have kidnapped Hyrule's Seven Sages and trapped them in dungeons around the land, on the orders of Ganon himself. So the real Link uses the power of the Master Sword to split himself into four and sets of in hot pursuit of his shady doppelgängers. Well, it's as good an excuse for a game as any other.

The bad Links have the ability to flit between the normal world and a background shadow world. You can sometimes see their silhouettes walking under the ground and through solid objects.

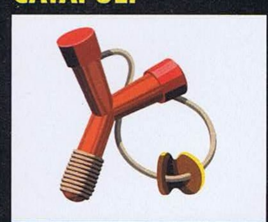
At specific moments during the game you can visit this world beneath a world by stepping into a portal, at which point the action transfers to the Game Boy Advance. You'll see Link's shadow floating around on the TV screen, while on the GBA you get a clear view of what's happening below.

If you're using a standard controller then a GBA emulator pops up in the middle of the screen. You can press the Z button to hide it in

BOOTY CALL

A selection of what Link has in his pocketses. You're only allowed one item at a time, though, so make sure you select a useful one.

CATAPULT



Tap the button and you shoot a pebble that rolls on the floor. Unlimited ammo, at least.

Hold the button and your Links charge up a long-range pebble assault. Nifty.

FIRE ROD



Spews fire, surprisingly enough. The fire effects in this game are very special.

Set alight some grass and stand back as a raging inferno consumes everything.



You'll want to set this off again and again. Well, if you have pyromaniac tendencies.

PEGASUS BOOTS



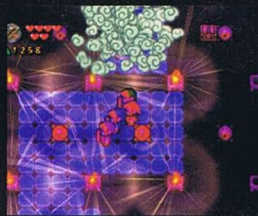
For charging into things that need to be shaken loose. Causes quite a vibration.

Power it up to the next level and this humble footwear makes your Links walk on air.

BOW AND ARROWS



As ever, you can use the arrows to light torches as well as kill things stony cold dead.



Arrange your Links into a line and you've got screen-clearing firepower. It's just like Zulu.

HAMMER TIME



As used for knocking pegs into the ground or setting off bombs via its seismic power.



Upgrade the hammer and it sends a paralysing ripple out across the entire screen.



You need to hammer this boss while its nose is stuck inside the GBA. Genius!

BOMB SQUAD



Standard explosive for busting through hollow walls or feeding to hungry animals.

Sometimes you get screen-filling bombs lobbed at you by enemies. Hide in the GBA!

SHOVEL HARD



Find a likely patch of land, whip out the shovel, and press the A-button. Boring, right?



With four Links working together you can excavate an entire field in no time at all.





△ Bad things are afoot in Kakariko Village. Thieving ratbags have moved in next door.



△ It's a boss. Not too challenging for one player, but a different proposition with four players.



△ Demonstrating the defensive circle formation.

case you need to see Link's shadow – there are several puzzles that involve splitting your party of four and sending one down to the shadow world, from where he can spookily interact with the others.

You can arrange the four Links in formations for fighting and puzzle-solving. A quick tap on the C-stick arranges them in a box, line or circle formation, so they can perform simultaneous attacks or combine their strength to lift giant objects. Hitting the left shoulder button returns to the default status, in which you control the normal green Link while the others follow passively.



JAPANESE KYOKASHO

You'll get utterly stuck on level 5-1 if you don't know a little Japanese. There's a scene where a Deku Scrub in the GBA world wants you to take three items to his friend up above. The items must be brought in the order specified, which is randomly selected. See the next yellow bar for a translation…

It's more than playable as a one-player adventure – in fact it's like a traditional Zelda game with anything remotely sedate chucked out in favour of non-stop action scenes and physical puzzles. You'll get a huge amount of enjoyment from mowing down entire screens full of enemies and greedily sweeping up the showers of glittering gems that fall from the sky as a reward. You'll experience just as many seemingly tough puzzles with forehead-slappingly obvious solutions as you did in the whole of *Wind Waker*, even though *Four Swords* won't take anything like as long to complete.

But if you don't have access to a few GBAs then you'll miss out on some fantastic multiplayer modes, which are the game's real reason for being. With two, three or four players, each playing via a GBA and link cable, the game is an entirely different proposition.

Simple puzzles become exercises in organisation and discipline, because each player is free to wander anywhere in the current section of the level.

"A TRADITIONAL ZELDA GAME WITH ANYTHING REMOTELY SEDATE CHUCKED OUT"



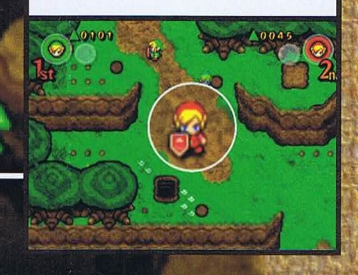
TINGLE

He floats down from the sky and snatches up any gems you drop in the heat of battle. Then he returns to his house of perversion, to rest a bit.



LINKS

Two of them, at least. The others are scrapping madly down the bottom.



ENEMIES

More than you've ever seen in a Zelda game. The bosses are pretty good too, although you'll meet a fair few of them more than once. Oh well.











Somebody has to take charge and persuade his mates to stop running around chucking pots at each other or setting forest fires, and concentrate on removing obstacles that require everyone's full attention. Even something as easy as simultaneously firing arrows at four targets tends to end up in a fit of laughter, as one disgruntled Link picks up another and chucks him down a pit.

And unlike *Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles*, the GBAs aren't used just for the sake of it. They're absolutely essential – whenever a player enters a building or drops down into the shadow world, he can continue playing on his own personal screen without interrupting the others. The main screen also zooms out to allow a wide range of movement, so your party can explore separately in a way that's impossible in any other game. We can imagine the developers of *FF:CC* must have been kicking themselves after seeing this, because it really does make their game look hopelessly uninventive. The Adventure mode alone would merit the score we're going to award it, but the game certainly doesn't stop there.

RUPEE-KYE-YAY

There's more – lots more. The Shadow Battle mode is a combat-and-collection game for two to four players. It's somewhat insubstantial, but with players dipping in and out of the shadow world, all sorts of items to collect, and action occurring on two screens at once, it's competitive and amusing. A little confusing, perhaps, but always fun.

Because many of the things you can do in the Shadow Battle mode, such as whacking other players and stealing their money, are also possible in the main Hyrule Adventure game, we spent more time in another bonus mode.

Navi Trackers, as it's referred to here, is a hilariously weird combination of orienteering and Zelda. The aim is to collect medals from pirates dotted around the level, but only in a specific order.

Your primary game screen is on the GBA. On the TV, Miss Tetra and a handful of other characters from *Wind Waker* excitedly present a map screen showing which pirate



KYOKASHO PART TWO

Here's what you could potentially be asked to collect:

ミズガメ
Pot of water
あぶらつぼ
Burning oil pot
クサ
Some grass
カンバン
Signpost
いわ
Rock
バクダン
Bomb

"That it's entirely in Japanese only makes it funnier"

HYRULE ADVENTURE

Four swords are better than one...



STEALTH *Like* Ocarina of Time, *there's a scene where you've got to sneak into a castle without being spotted. Easy with one player, madcap fun with four.*



THIEVES *Kakariko Village is infested with dodgy geezers who'll rob you blind if you aren't careful. Round them up and lob them in the prison pen for a reward.*



EPONA *Lucky there are four horses available, otherwise the Links might have to double up. And they don't share the saddle with any man, no sir. Not with no man.*



FORMATIONS *Tap L to bring up a menu of the available formations. It all depends on how many Links you have – you can pass your spare ones to a mate if you want.*



WHIRLWIND *Hold the attack button or rotate the stick/pad to charge a mega attack. Wait until you have maximum sword power for the best effect.*



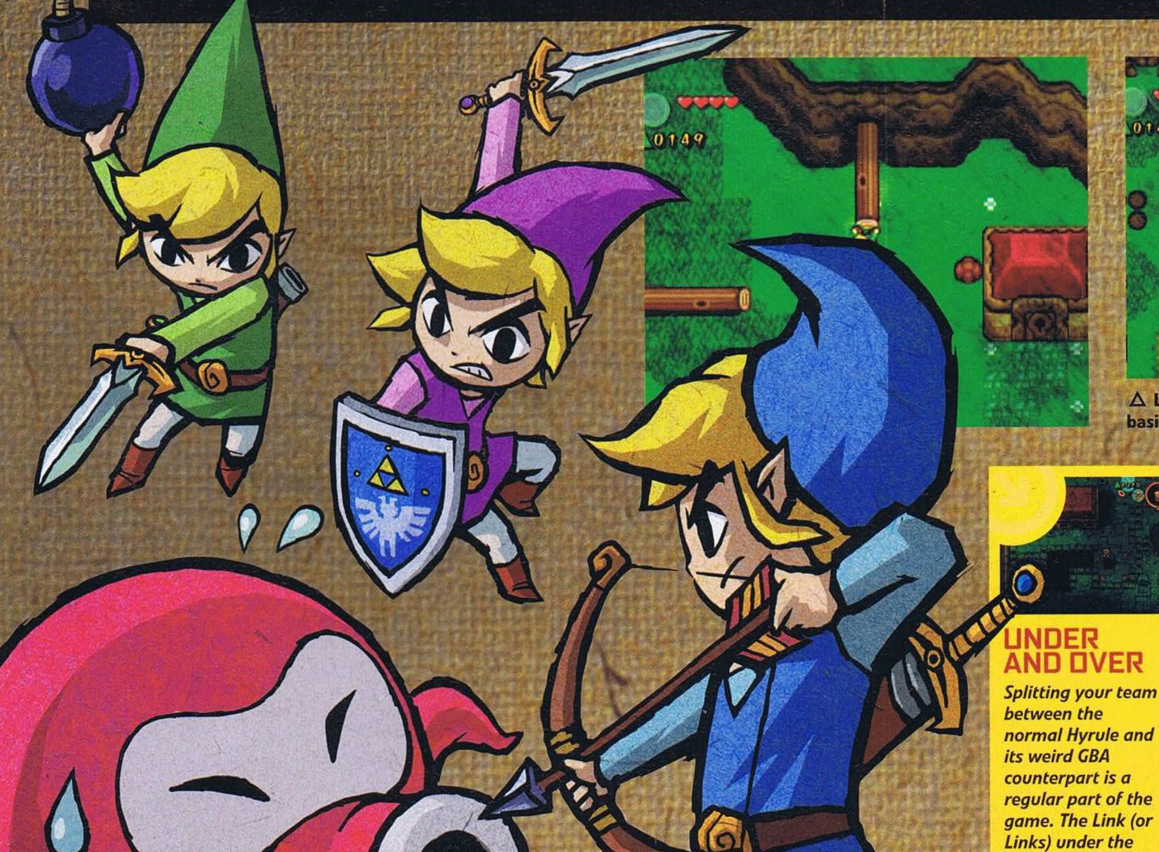
DUNGEONS *It's effectively 100% dungeon when you consider the connecting bits are little more than mini-dungeons set outdoors or in other locations. A total of 24 levels.*



SQUARE ONE *This doesn't have any of the RPG elements of other Zelda games. When you start a new level you're stripped of all heart containers, items, cash and upgrades.*



COMBOS *Every time you beat an enemy without getting hit yourself, you rack up a combo score. Getting big combos earns points, but enemies don't regenerate here.*



△ **Link's evil counterparts pop up on a regular basis to let you know you're on the right track.**

UNDER AND OVER

***Splitting your team between the normal Hyrule and its weird GBA counterpart is a regular part of the game. The Link (or Links) under the ground can then grab hold of the ones on the normal screen and transport them over obstacles. The twin world thing reminds us of the ancient* Mole Panic.**

you're supposed to locate next. There's a constant frenzy of activity as players activate special items, hit switches to change the pirates' numbering, and batter each other out of the way to steal medals.

Meanwhile, as the clock ticks away, Miss Tetra's commentary grows ever more animated. She hops around like she's dancing on hot coals, windmills her arms, shouts out encouragement, chants the number you're supposed to be searching for, and sometimes calls in *Wind Waker*'s brilliant sideshow owner while she takes a break. Maybe she has to go and dunk her head in a barrel of iced water to cool off during her performance.

The nine-minute time limit passes in the blink of an eye, but it

PIRACY!

Choice bits from the Navi Trackers mode in action.

■ Tetra commentates on some three-way Link action.

■ The sardonic sideshow owner pops up to lend a hand.

■ And this is what the playing area looks like on your GBA.

ZELDA: FOUR SWORDS +

A whole new dimension for Hyrule



△ *Wind Waker* special effects.



△ One player, no GBA. Easy.



△ Don't hang around when the giant fuse on this bomb burns down.



△ We've hit a gem fountain!



△ Four catapults for four swords.

probably wouldn't be nearly as good without the 1,000mph voice-over. That it's entirely in Japanese only makes it funnier.

Sadly the commentary means Navi Trackers probably won't be included with the game when it's released over here. At the time of writing it's even rumoured that given the game's modest sales expectations, the expense of an English translation means Navi Trackers is likely to be cut from the US release. A multi-language Euro version is obviously out of the question, even though it's perfectly playable in Japanese.

So you're going to have to import from Japan if you want to play the game the way it was intended. In fact we can highly recommend doing so, as the main Hyrule Adventure section will last roughly twice as long as it would if you could understand all of the blatantly obvious hints you'll receive along the way.

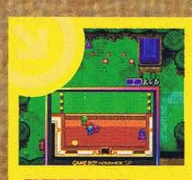
Missing out on the plot is a small price to pay when you consider the satisfaction gained from solving puzzles without having some random character telling you what to do. There's only one sequence where a lack of Japanese will halt your progress – you'll find the solution elsewhere in this review.

Four Swords is simply the most amazingly unexpected thing to happen to Zelda since Nintendo unveiled the cel-shaded Link to an audience of fat, cynical, American internet hacks. It's also the first game that makes the GBA-Gamecube link seem like a revolutionary idea rather than just a gimmick.

You're a Nintendo fan. You owe it to yourself, and your friends, to get hold of *Four Swords* as soon as you possible can.

MARTIN KITTS

"THE MOST UNEXPECTED THING TO HAPPEN TO ZELDA SINCE CEL-SHADED LINK"



STEREO VISION

There are a few times when you'll need to watch the GBA screen and the TV at the same time. Take this archery bonus game, for example. Link moves around inside the building, on the GBA, but the targets are up on the main screen. Certainly adds a fresh twist to a familiar routine.



- Three game modes.
- Spectacular visuals.
- Hilarious fun.
- Brilliantly designed.



- Multiplayer modes require Game Boys.
- Solo adventure is relatively brief.



Legend Of Zelda: A Link To The Past
Nintendo
NGC/77 92%
With randomly generated four-player levels.



9 VISUALS
Plain old 2D graphics have rarely looked as good as this.

8 SOUNDS
Familiar music, great voice acting from the Japanese Tetra.

9 MASTERY
By far the best use of the GBA link-up. It's eye-opening stuff.

9 LIFESPAN
Very replayable, and much more than just a short-term novelty.

VERDICT

Why didn't they think of this years ago? A superb adventure and a great showcase for the GBA-GC link.





CUSTOM ROBO

Build 'em and fight 'em in a frantic mixture of Pokémon and Smash Bros…

INFO BURST

PUBLISHER	NINTENDO
DEVELOPER	NOISE
RELEASE DATE	OUT NOW
PLAYERS	1-4
MEM. CARD PAGES	15
GBA LINK-UP	NO
SURROUND SOUND	YES
WIDESCREEN	NO
COST	¥5,800 (£30)

Remember Sega's arcade classic *Virtual On*, with its complicated robot battles, deep strategy and brain-twisting controls? Don't let anyone tell you that *Custom Robo* is even remotely like it. The two games are often mentioned in the same breath (like above, in fact) but other than the robot theme they have practically nothing in common.

Custom Robo: Battle Revolution is Nintendo's belated follow-up to two mildly successful N64 *Custom Robo* titles, neither of which saw the light of day outside of Japan.

It's a little like a fast action equivalent of *Pokémon*. You fight against a huge variety of different robots in order to win new parts for your own mechanical warrior. By winning as many parts as possible you can create a unique fighting machine with abilities customised for your own personal playing style.

TELLING TALES

At the heart of the game is a very simple story mode that looks a bit like an RPG but is way too linear and basic to qualify for that description. You play a robo novice who gets involved with a group of experienced but slightly useless fighters, and works his way up

TEENY ARENAS

You fight in all sorts of strange places. There's a bowl-type arena, which makes for very brief battles, and several VR-style ones with glowing neon walls. We like the outdoor ones best, but there's something quite appealing about this one – a playroom with a toy train.

△ **Victory! Now we're going to cannibalise our victim's twitching corpse.**



△ **Robots in space – the best place for them, we'd say. Metal lunatics.**

STORY TIME
There are robots and you fight them.



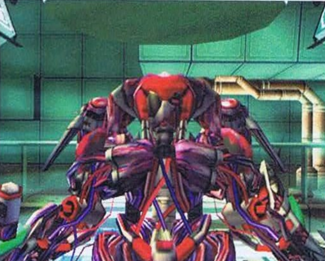
This is our hero. He lives on his own and takes great delight in thrashing small kids and stealing bits from their robots.



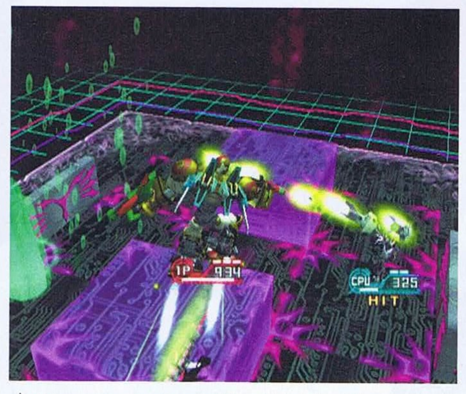
Here's his gang of friends. There's a bloke with a terrible temper, one who's a bit lecherous, and a girl with huge blue hair.



She isn't a friend – she's quite clearly a bad girl who no decent boy should get involved with. Excellent shoulder pads, though.



And finally, here's a robot that's escaped from its cubic container and is running around shooting vases. The end.



△ **Have at ye, mechanical fiend! Eat death!**



△ **When a robot's down, put in some painful afters.**



△ **The incredibly linear 'RPG' map. No exploring here.**

through the battle rankings while pursuing a group of troublemakers bent on causing chaos in the polite world of robo combat.

The plot is incredibly heavy on the Japanese text, consisting of so many pages of dialogue that it can take up to a couple of minutes to get through a single scene. But it doesn't seem to matter how advanced your Japanese skills are, because comprehension isn't required. You don't have to make choices according to what you hear. There's only ever one route to follow, and one option that leads to the advancement of the story.

Fortunately the whole point of the game is to fight, fight and fight some more. Story mode is just a long-winded way of leading you between tournaments, and once you're involved in a heated battle with up to three other robots you'll soon forget that the connecting scenes are a little bit pointless.

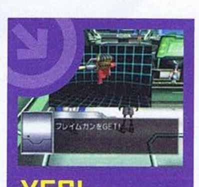
"THE WHOLE POINT OF THE GAME IS TO FIGHT, FIGHT AND FIGHT SOME MORE"

The battles are supposed to be virtual reality affairs, taking place in a variety of holographic arenas projected in the air between the combatants. You start by launching a cube containing your robot from a cannon in the middle of the playing area. Depending on which way up the cube lands you'll have to make a certain number of button presses to awaken the robot inside. Do it first and you'll have a free shot at your rival.

GUNISHMENT

Then it's all a matter of hammering away with your missiles and laser guns until one of the robots keels over through terminal lack of health. You have four types of attack available: guns, bombs, pod weapons and a melée attack. Each of them can be customised with the parts you win.

Your gun is the main weapon, with a



YES! PART GET!

You win a choice piece of equipment from every robot you defeat. Usually when you're introduced to a new weapon by having it blasted in your face during a humiliating defeat it means you'll get that item when you finally figure out how to win. Some of the items are rubbish, though.

"A battle of eye-searing intensity"



△ **Adventures in the robo research lab. It's just like *Pokémon*, you know.**

bewildering array of custom options. You can choose heavy guns that fire slowly, light ones that fire at insane speeds, guns that shoot giant homing bubbles, swords, flamethrowers and more.

Each type works best against certain enemies and in certain situations. You won't know which one you're going to need until you get into the battle and take a humiliating pasting because you were totally outgunned by an opponent set up to take the best advantage of the terrain. Then it's time to head back to the customisation screen and choose something more appropriate.

Bombs and pods work in a slightly different way. The bomb weapons can reach across the entire width of the arena but they're slow-moving. To make the best use of them you'll need to combine them with the pod weapons, which can be anything from a gang of exploding spiders to a cluster of parachuting explosives. Time it right and you can juggle your enemy until he's temporarily knocked to the ground, at which point you pile in with a gratuitous blast of afters.

Robots that have been violated in this manner get a few seconds' grace while they're reborn – they don't recover any health but they do get time to retreat or take some instant revenge.

SPLIT SCREEN

After you get shot out of the cannon at the start of the round, the screen splits to give each player a close-up view of his robot cube and the countdown timer within. Press the A button to wake the robot faster, otherwise you'll cop some cheap shots from your rivals.

FEEL THE WIDTH

That's essentially how the whole thing works. Much like *Smash Bros*, you can treat it as a standard button-masher or use the commendably slick control scheme to the best tactical advantage.

Walls are there to be hidden behind, and high ground provides

OUR ROBO
He's in the middle of that little lot. Somewhere. Anyway, he's a rock-hard killing machine, armed with a nuclear minigun. We call him Cecil.

UTTER CHAOS
When the bombs are falling and the robots are mixing it up, who knows what's going on? Not us, anyway.

△ Fat mouse robot and little girl robot – a deadly alliance.

△ You mean they would have gotten away with it if it wasn't for those pesky kids?

a great sniping spot if you're equipped with a decent long-range weapon. Some levels have moving objects or high sides perfect for jumping on. Other levels are better suited to close-range combat, and so your robot will have to be set up accordingly.

There's a fair amount of skill required if you're going to master the combos and get the best out of the battles. It seems to work best in a medium-size arena with two robots, but you can have up to four if you're in the mood for a battle of eye-searing intensity.

However, tactics tend to go right out of the window when you're fighting in teams. You automatically lock on to one robot at all times, pressing the Y-button to focus on a different one. When the camera is zoomed out and there are projectiles flying all over the place, switching focus is the only way to determine which robot is your teammate, as they look very similar from a distance. This precludes any sort of team tactics, apart from the odd moment when you and your friend accidentally manage to focus on the same robot and blast it into oblivion in double-quick time.

It's one of those games that feels exactly right, from the simplicity of the controls to the satisfaction of seeing your enemy blasted high into the air via a succession of well-placed bombs.

A working knowledge of katakana is very helpful for figuring out what the weapons are on the customisation screen, as there are hundreds of different ones to choose from, but you can play reasonably effectively by opting for a random selection.

An English-language version would be welcome. We like robots in this country too, Nintendo.

MARTIN KITTS

"THERE'S A FAIR AMOUNT OF SKILL REQUIRED IF YOU'RE TO MASTER THE COMBOS"

SHIFTING FLOORS
A handful of arenas have twists, such as panels that damage your robot and blast it into the sky so the others can use it for target practice. This one has morphing floors, so the wall you were hiding behind might disappear and you'll find your robot sitting on top of a huge column.


- Super slick.
- Intuitive controls.
- Customisation.
- Varied arenas.


- A bit of a pushover in the early stages.
- Loads of text – you must read katakana.

IF YOU LIKE THIS...
Super Smash Brothers Melee
Nintendo
NGC/68 91%
Frantic four-player fighting with Nintendo's superstars.



8 VISUALS
Nicely designed robots, perfectly smooth animation.

7 SOUNDS
Loud weapon effects and predictably anodyne music.

8 MASTERY
Slick and polished controls, with a great feeling of weight.

9 LIFESPAN
Collect all the parts, battle unique robots in four-player mode.

VERDICT
Immediate, lively and easy to learn. Creating your own Go-sen has never been so enjoyable. PAL version, please!



82

CELL DIVISION

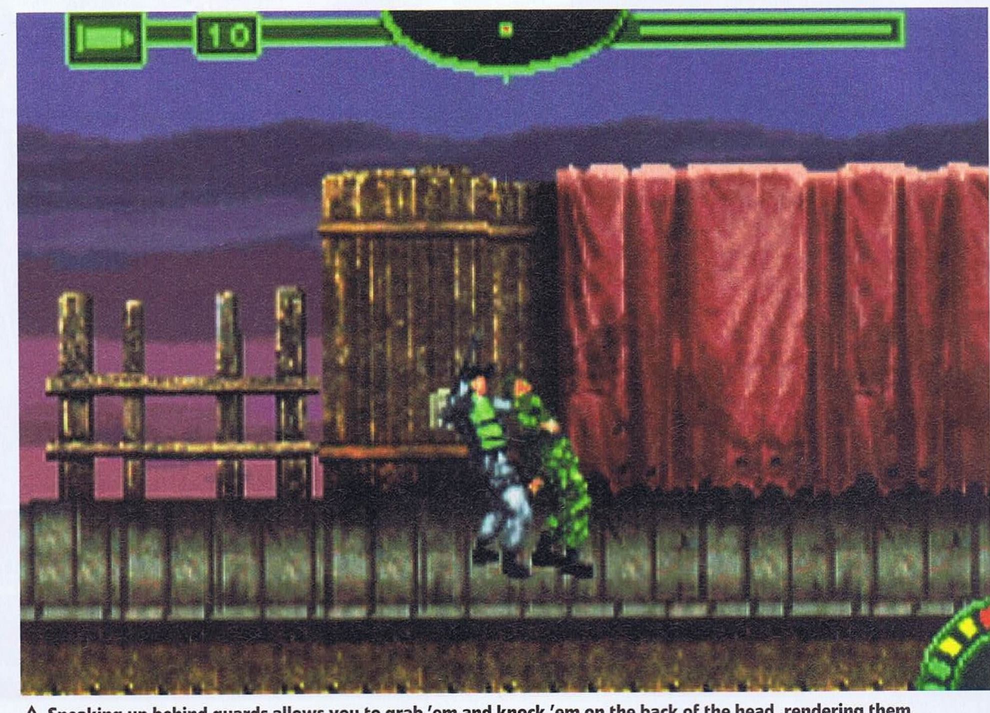
The Gamecube version of *Pandora Tomorrow* doesn't have a release date yet and, disappointingly, there's no news of any connectivity feature linking the Gamecube and GBA versions. A missed opportunity there, we feel – but a fun GBA game nontheless....



△ Sam's stealth gear is ideal for hanging around back alleys late on Saturday night. The pervert.



△ One of the lock-picking minigames, here. The computer-hacking one is by far the best.



△ Sneaking up behind guards allows you to grab 'em and knock 'em on the back of the head, rendering them unconscious. If they see you, however, they'll run to the nearest alarm, and if it goes off, it's game over. Man.

SPLINTER CELL PANDORA TOMORROW

Anything Sam Fisher can do, his miniaturised alter-ego can do just as well. But he's doing it in one less dimension, naturally.

Sam Fisher might have shrunk, but it's only made him stealthier (and not just because he's now small enough to nip into mouseholes and trouser pockets). Everyone's favourite gruff-voiced espionage expert has made a thoroughly enjoyable leap through the de-bigulator to the GBA, and to Ubi Soft's credit they've certainly managed to keep intact most of what makes *Splinter Cell* so much fun on Gamecube.

If you've played the original *'Cell* you'll know what to expect. There's a bit of plot to set the scene, providing an excuse for Mr Fisher's love of tip-toeing through other peoples' property. And sneaking is what the game's all about; even given that this is a 2D side-scroller, it's surprising how many stealth tricks are in the game.

Hit Up on the D-pad and Sam can press against a wall, allowing him both to slip through narrow areas and glide behind things such as curtains in order to hide from guards and panicked civilians. He can shimmy up poles, swing around and even do that trick where he pops his legs up and shuffles along like a sloth with three green-glowing eyeballs. A scanning device – deployed by hitting L – allows him to reconnoitre an area by peeking a few screens ahead. It's all here, and the use of shadows (to hide things) is given as much emphasis as you'd expect.

> "THIS STEALTH BUSINESS IS RECREATED IN MARVELLOUS MINIATURE FASHION"

Sadly, while all this stealth business is recreated in marvellous miniature fashion, and there's a thrill to be had from delving into Sam's bag of tricks and sneaking up on goons, *Pandora Tomorrow* GBA suffers from the same flaw as its bigger brothers; namely, it's wall-punchingly hard and gets all too samey all too soon. If one alarm gets set off it's game over, which is frustrating given the maddening save system – you can only save at the end of each *very lengthy* mission – and is a major hurdle to enjoying what is otherwise an excellent title. You'll almost always be doing the same thing too, even despite some variety offered by lock-picking minigames and first-person sniping sections.

Initially excellent, Pandora Tomorrow is undone by excessive difficulty and monotony. If you're patient, however, there's lots to love.

JES BICKHAM

INFO BURST

FROM	UBI SOFT
PLAYERS	1
SINGLE CART LINK	NO
SAVE	ON CART
OUT	NOW
COST	£30



DID YOU KNOW? Tom Clancy worked as an insurance broker before getting his first book – The Hunt for Red October – published in 1984, at the age of 37.



△ Hold down both shoulder buttons to charge up a power bar thingy that allows you to, er, do something. Well, you can certainly throw fireballs. Handy, that.



△ The game gets quite hard early on but it will still always be utter pump.



△ The Air Battles are shocking. Utterly lacking in any semblance of skill.

DRAGONBALL Z TAIKETZU

A dreadful cash-in on a popular cartoon! Some things never change.

Only the most undemanding – or indeed demented - Dragon Ball Z fan could eke the slightest flicker of enjoyment out of this beat-'em-up. In wielding the razor-sharp **NGC** Scalpel Of Reviewing we can come quickly and concisely to the following conclusion: it sucks. Hard.

Of course, the GBA is hardly the home of quality beat-'em-ups. *Tekken Advance* is okay, *Street Fighter's* ace, and then there's, well... not a whole lot really. The point is, *Dragon Ball Z: Taiketsu* does nothing to remedy matters, being about as basic as can be and soul-stunningly tedious to boot. In fact, this title sets new standards of non-excitement for handheld fisticuffs.

First impressions are that it's got promise. The characters are nicely detailed and animated, but that's the only good bit (aside from a generous helping of unlockable biographies, art and, er, 'music'). Moves are limited and the 18 initial characters all fight in an almost-identical fashion. Attacks don't do as much damage as they appear to, making fights long, boring and over-reliant on hurling fireballs. The Air Battles are atrocious too – a signature feature of the franchise, here they're reduced to hammering the A button in a skill-dissolving display of insomnia-banishment. And ultimately it's just horribly repetitive.

Don't be fooled by the Dragon Ball Z name; this is Satan's excrement piped into a cartridge. Fact.

JES BICKHAM



△ Unsurprisingly, it's out on the shelves before we get to review it...

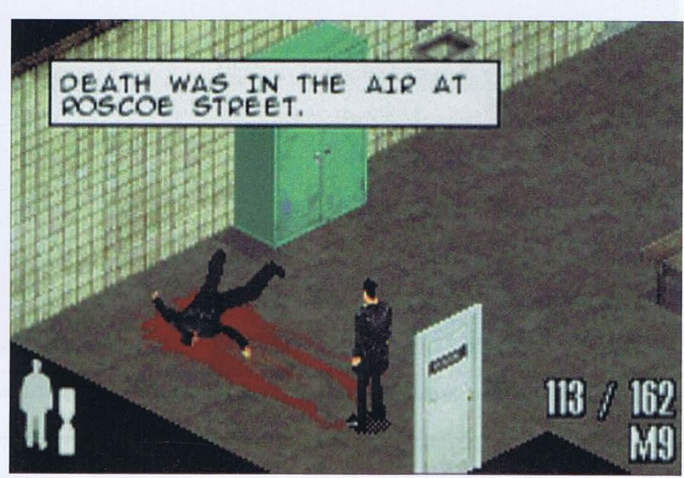
INFO BURST

FROM	ATARI
PLAYERS	1-2
SINGLE CART LINK	NO
SAVE	ON CART
OUT	NOW
COST	£30

NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING **30**

MAX PAYNE

Silly name, entertaining game. There's a moral in there, somewhere.



△ The game prides itself on bein gritty and 'adult', almost to the point of being a bit silly. Still, there's always plenty of blood and guts to darken the mood.



△ Hit the R trigger and off you dive in glorious slow motion. Lovely.



△ Sadly, the camera changes perspective in a horribly jarring way.



It's all so terribly *clichéd.* Embittered protagonist Max (groan) Payne is out for revenge, with only a selection of guns, a flappy great trenchcoat and the handy magical ability to slow down time to aid him. Hardly original, is it? Nevertheless, in this particular case it doesn't really matter, because from those basic elements Rockstar have fashioned a tidy little slice of handheld blood 'n guts.

Downsized from the PC, PS2 and Xbox versions he may be, but the core gameplay elements of what makes *Max Payne* work are present and correct in his tiny incarnation. The game is literally all about shooting bad guys, with the shootouts framed within a neat graphic novel-style narrative (that is, admittedly, almost laughably serious and mock-noir at times) with the help of Matrix-nicked bullet time.

Naturally, it's this last element that gives the game its biggest hook. Hit R and you can slow time down, leaping sideways and pumping shotgun shells at enemy goons in graceful slo-mo. By the same token, you can use bullet time to dodge enemy shots, and it all works very well indeed. In fact, *Max Payne* is excellent fun, with only a pathetic lifespan (six hours if you're lucky) and a jarring, jerking camera to poop in the butter.

JES BICKHAM

INFO BURST

FROM	ROCKSTAR
PLAYERS	1
SINGLE CARD LINK	NO
SAVE	ON CART
OUT	NOW
COST	£30



YU-GI-OH!
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

Boy with spiky hair plays cards. Not the most compelling idea for a game you've ever heard, is it?


Δ Cards. CARDS! See the sexy cards! Makes you want to play, doesn't it? No? Okay.



Δ Ah, the ol' Seven Tools of the Bandit. Which in this case appears to be a Swiss Army Knife. We're sure Dick Turpin didn't have access to one of those. Or maybe he did. Hmm.

Okay, if you've never played a Yu-Gi-Oh! game before, this isn't the place to start. A *FIFA*-like addition to the franchise, this is little more than an update to last year's model and will mystify the newcomer. There's not even a tutorial; but then, this is meant for hardcore Yu-Gi-Oh! gamers.

What you get for your cash are basically 100 new cards to add to the existing 1000, plus some updated rules and translation software that allows you to link GBAs and play with somebody who's using a different language. This last bit's great if you're entering this year's Yu-Gi-Oh! tournament, but otherwise, unless you've got a European cousin who might want to play this with you, it's a redundant feature. Despite its unfriendly nature though, *Yu-Gi-Oh!* remains a surprisingly deep and enjoyable card game, where the point is to crush your opponents monsters and do damage to him (not *actual* damage, of course. That'd be silly).

Given the amount of cards with which you can design a deck, the scope for individual strategy is immense; but as we said at the start of this review, you're never going to learn how to play the game well from this experts-only instalment. Unless, obviously, you're an expert, in which case you can add 10% to the score.

JES BICKHAM

INFO BURST

FROM	KONAMI
PLAYERS	1-2
SINGLE CART LINK	NO
SAVE	ON CART
OUT	NOW
COST	£30





TAK AND THE POWER OF JUJU

THQ's brand-new franchise makes a dispirited leap to the GBA, disheartened by being a bit crap.


Δ Yep, the rhino can jump, just like real-life rhinos. What a dumbass.


Δ You're never given a pertinent explanation concerning the sheep.


Δ Oh look – a rhino. Jump on his back to ride him through the level, tossing bad guys willy-nilly with his enormous horn. Original it ain't. Or, indeed, particularly fun.

Invariably, any platformer is going to be judged against the highest standards the genre can offer. That means Mario. And after hundreds of years nobody's managed to make a Mario-beater yet, which doesn't bode well for THQ's latest homegrown star, lumpen pygmy guttersnipe Tak.

Timed to coincide with the release of the Gamecube version of the game, Tak's GBA outing is even less impressive than its companion title. Even before you play the game, Tak himself gets in the way of your enjoyment; he's an unlovely attempt at creating a new franchise star, with a distinct lack of charm. However, Tak's premier outing certainly *looks* the part; this is a particularly pretty game, perversely full of character considering Tak himself is exactly the kind of designed-by-committee nondescript that nobody could ever really give a fig about.

So it looks good. But it plays like every derivative platformer around: amble along, jumping and shooting enemies (well, beehives), collecting sheep (who are obviously transformed villagers, although you're not told this), and so on. There's not a fresh or exciting idea anywhere; you even get to ride a rhino, for the love of Shigsy, which is a shameless steal from *Donkey Kong Country*.

Tak and the Power of Juju can only be described thusly: utterly average.

JES BICKHAM

INFO BURST

FROM	THQ
PLAYERS	1
SINGLE CART LINK	NO
SAVE	ON CART
OUT	NOW
COST	£30

NGC INDEPENDENT NINTENDO GAMING **50**



WWE
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FIVE FOR A PRIZE! Over the next few pages, you'll see a selection of Top Fives – games hand-picked by us which we recommend anyone new to Nintendo Gamecube gets involved with. Now we want yours. They can be any regular category of game, or something a little different (your five favourite multiplayer games, five games with brilliant endings etc). Send us your Top Five list and earn yourself a priceless (or, more likely, worthless) prize!

NGC ESSENTIAL

THE BEST 'CUBE GAMES MONEY CAN BUY…

TOP FIVE THINGS WE'VE DONE IN HARVEST MOON

Being a farmer rules – if you don't believe us, here's the proof…



GOT MARRIED
Hel-lo ladies!



KEPT COWS
They're Cow-aii (geddit?)



GONE FISHING
A bit of peace and quiet



SOLD STUFF
For a HUGE profit. Yes



MET MUKU
Mo-faaaaaaa! indeed









1 THE LEGEND OF ZELDA THE WIND WAKER — 97



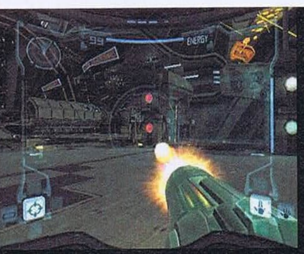
NINTENDO ■ NGC/79

The babbling of the internet whingers faded to a stunned silence when this hit the shelves. It's as exquisitely fashioned as a Disney feature film, and doesn't lose any of the gameplay for it. Some sailing sections spoil it a bit, and it's pretty short, but this is as close to 'art' as 'games' have been yet.

NGC STAR GAME

2 METROID PRIME — 97





NINTENDO NGC/79

A polished, addictive adventure-cum-shooter-cum-platformer that pushes the envelope in every field.

3 SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE — 96





NINTENDO NGC/73

Mazza's cleaning up a tropical island. With the polished visuals and sense of fun of *Mario 64*, this pushes the right buttons.

4 MARIO KART DOUBLE DASH!! — 93



NINTENDO NGC/88

The best *MK* ever – and the best multiplayer title on GC. More characters, special weapons and crazy tracks.

5 F-ZERO GX — 93





NINTENDO NGC/85

Speed, challenge and stunningly designed tracks blended to form the finest of arcade racing experiences. It really is fast.

6 SOUL CALIBUR 2 — 92



NAMCO NGC/85

The best fighting game on *any* system, offering rich depths to those who go looking. And you can go nuts with Link.

7 TIMESPLITTERS 2 — 92



EIDOS ■ NGC/73

A stonker of a time-travelling FPS, *Timesplitters 2* crept out of nowhere to become GC's finest example of the genre. Wick!

8 SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE — 91









NINTENDO NGC/68

An eye-singeing multiplayer and cameos from just about every Ninty character make this basher special.

9 HARVEST MOON A WONDERFUL LIFE — 91




UBI SOFT NGC/91

Utterly charming farm sim – sounds unremarkable, but it'll have you addicted in no time. Wonderful indeed.

10 HITMAN 2 SILENT ASSASSIN — 91





EIDOS ■ NGC/82

Tighten the fibre-wire and leave your morals at the door as Mr 47 brings his elimination simulation to the 'Cube. This is stealthy, free-form gaming at its finest.

11 WAVE RACE BLUE STORM — 91



NINTENDO NGC/67

Slight frame-rate problems in PAL, but *Blue Storm* is still a fabulous racer with *the* most incredible water effects.

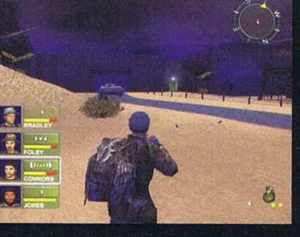
12 VIEWTIFUL JOE — 90



CAPCOM NGC/80

Distinctive-looking side-scrolling 2D beat-'em-up in which you feel you're editing a movie while you're playing a game.

13 WORMS 3D — 90



SEGA ■ NGC/87

Turn-based strategy, but loopier than a tin of spaghetti hoops. The annelids enter 3D – all you need for stupid fun is three homicidal pals.

14 BURNOUT 2 — 90




ACCLAIM NGC/80

B2 takes the best bits of the first game – speed and collisions – and welds them onto more modes than you can eat.

15 PHANTASY STAR ONLINE — 90




ATARI ■ NGC/78

Essentially *Gauntlet* with lots of numbers and menu screens, online *PSO* becomes an epic tale of crate-smashing and item collection.

16 1080° AVALANCHE — 90



NINTENDO NGC/89

Fewer tricks involved than in *SSX3* – more of a snowboard racer than an extreme sports title. You'll grow to love it.

17 METAL GEAR SOLID THE TWIN SNAKES — 90



KONAMI ■ NGC/91

This story of taking on terrorists is an old one, but the updated graphics and gameplay make this Snaky snuff-fest a Gamecube essential.

18 SKIES OF ARCADIA LEGENDS — 90



ATARI ■ NGC/81

Vast RPG ported from the Dreamcast. "It'll take away a chunk of your life and you won't want it back", says a man versed in such things.

19 CONFLICT DESERT STORM 2 — 90

SCI ■ NGC/86

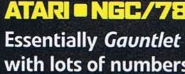
Sandy warmongering. You're not allowed to let any of your men die in this sequel, which leads to all sorts of life-saving heroic gameplay.

20 SSX 3 — 89

EA ■ NGC/87

Improves over its excellent predecessor in every area. A range of modes, ludicrous tricks and the mountain to end all videogame mountains will keep you busy.

TOP TEN GBA GAMES




1 ADVANCE WARS 1 & 2
Cute-looking turn-based strategy, with a frighteningly addictive, super-challenging core. Honestly, it's better than it sounds. *AW2* is essentially *Advance Wars 1.5*, but it's tweaked to perfection.

2 METROID FUSION
Everything that has ever made *Metroid* great can be found here. A sprawling environment littered with baddies and an imposing difficulty level. It has a great link-up feature with *Prime* too.

3 SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 2
This tweaked version of the SNES classic boasts a massive game world and some of the tightest level designs ever.

4 WARIO WARE
Imagine the simple graphics and gameplay of Game & Watch fired at you in five-second bursts. Loopy fun that you'll keep returning to.

5 MARIO KART SUPER CIRCUIT
Nicks the best bits from the SNES and N64 versions, and if you've got four friends, GBAs and cables, they can play too.

6 POKÉMON RUBY & SAPPHIRE
The same structure as before – catch 'em all, send 'em into battle – but still the most entertaining RPG out there…

7 STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3
An incredible conversion of one of the best fighters ever. Massive single-player and a brilliant two-player.

8 MARIO & LUIGI SUPERSTAR SAGA
An RPG with puzzle and platform elements starring our two top plumbers.

9 GRADIUS ADVANCE
The best shooter on Game Boy Advance. Classic *Gradius* gameplay, with innovative levels and fantastic bosses.

10 TOP GEAR RALLY
Impressive 3D racer – you can really feel the speed, even though it's on a handheld. It's got plenty of depth when you get into it.

N·GC DIRECTORY



Your at-a-glance guide to every other PAL title on Gamecube.

HOW IT ALL WORKS

Title, score, publisher and where to find the review.

A brief outline of what to expect and whether you should consider it…



SONIC BOOM | **58**

CAPCOM ■ NGC/77
The world goes crazy for Sonic, and prices for his games rocket. Better than the x-rated sequel *Sonic Bust*.

18 WHEELER PRO AMERICAN TRUCKER | **48**

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/68
Drive your truck and avoid 'smokey'. The arcade version with the sit-in cabinet was better.

2002 FIFA WORLD CUP | **30**

EA ■ NGC/69
As much fun as being told your parents have been killed in a car crash and then contracting Weil's Disease.

ACE GOLF | **74**

EIDOS ■ NGC/74
A highly enjoyable, relaxing sticksie-ball game that treads the middle-ground between fun and serious.

AGGRESSIVE INLINE | **81**

ACTIVISION ■ NGC/72
Hawk's alterno-clone – you skate around massive arenas, 'busting' tricks on a pair of 'roller-boots'.

ATV QUAD POWER RACING 2 | **70**

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/77
Wave Race on land with farming utility vehicles. Competent, but there's superior racing fare out there.

BALDUR'S GATE DARK ALLIANCE | **80**

VIVENDI ■ NGC/81
Dungeon-slashing adventurising with fewer numbers and a special two-player flavour. Actually quite good.

BARBARIAN | **70**

VIRGIN ■ NGC/72
A button-mashing fantasy battler complete with fully-smashable arenas. Fun, but not as good as *Smash Bros.*



BATMAN: DARK TOMORROW | **15**

KEMCO ■ NGC/81
For ages, Gamecube's most arse-clenchingly bad title. Clunky, dull, gameplay-free superheroics.

BATMAN: RISE OF SIN TZU | **45**

UBI SOFT ■ NGC/88
Repeated bashing that would've been great 15 years ago. It's okay, but only just. Batman deserves better.

BATMAN VENGEANCE | **70**

UBI SOFT ■ NGC/67
Cel-shaded platforming cartoon bat-action. One of the first Cube games – it's looking pretty ropy already.

BEACH SPIKERS | **79**

ATARI ■ NGC/72
Volleyball on sand. Addictive with four players, but the single-player's longevity lets the side down.

BEYBLADE: SUPER TOURNAMENT BATTLE | **10**

ATARI ■ NGC/88
For £40, we'll come and cheesegrater your eyes. It's more fun and lasts longer than this spinning top sim.

BIG AIR FREESTYLE | **28**

ATARI ■ NGC/75
Another awful off-road bike title, the kind that makes you want to cry the second you've started playing.

BIG MUTHA TRUCKERS | **71**

EMPIRE ■ NGC/83
A cross between *Elite* and Smokey and The Bandit, but with The Reynolds replaced by wall-eyed hillbillies.

BILLY HATCHER & THE GIANT EGG | **86**

SEGA ■ NGC/87
Rescue the Chicken Elders by rolling an egg around and smacking bad guys with it. Hatch it while you can!

BIONICLE | **29**

EA ■ NGC/87
Diabionicle, more like. Tedious and fiddly with a duff camera and no incentive to keep playing.

TOP FIVE PLATFORM GAMES



SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE
A tour-de-force of everything good gaming should be.

LUIGI'S MANSION
Yes, it's a little easy to polish off, but you'll enjoy every second.

RAYMAN 3 HOODLUM HAVOC
Can't touch *Sunshine*, but it's entertaining and looks 'the bomb'.

WARIO WORLD
Not that tough to beat, admittedly, but still bags of fun.

SONIC MEGA COLLECTION
The best hedgehog games in existence on one tiny disc.

TOP FIVE RACING GAMES



MARIO KART: DOUBLE DASH!!
Single-player mode looks as cute as ever, but is rock hard.

F-ZERO GX
Expertly crafted arcade fun. Really rockets along.

WAVE RACE BLUE STORM
Classic Nintendo action with dazzling water effects.

BURNOUT 2
Fast car racing combined with steel-crunching crashes.

EXTREME G 3
The weapons are what make this future racer shine.

BLOOD OMEN 2 LEGACY OF KAIN | **72**

EIDOS ■ NGC/77
Gamecube's other undead hack-fest. After 1,000 years of slumber, evil vampire Kain is awake and hungry.

BLOOD RAYNE | **65**

VIVENDI ■ NGC/79
Vampire fun. Dismember Nazis, fire period weaponry, and battle an *evil priest* driving an *armoured pulpit*.

BLOODY ROAR: PRIMAL FURY | **74**

ACTIVISION ■ NGC/68
Competent morphing-into-animals fighting antics, but *Capcom vs SNK* and *Mortal Kombat* have surpassed it.

BMX XXX | **48**

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/76
Childish, boring BMX game featuring strippers showing you their nipples. Get a girlfriend instead.

BOMBERMAN GENERATIONS | **70**

VIVENDI ■ NGC/76
Yet another update of the arson franchise. Single-player is tedious; four-player is addictive as ever.

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER CHAOS BLEEDS | **70**

VIVENDI ■ NGC/86
Lacking in essential Buffiness, and not just because the Gellar girl didn't voice it. Good, but not great.

BURNOUT | **86**

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67
With spectacular crashes and perfect handling, *Burnout* is a dream of a game, even if it's over a bit quickly.

CAPCOM VS SNK 2 EO | **79**

CAPCOM ■ NGC/72
A great game, but purist retro freaks will want to fork out for a clunky arcade stick to get the most from it…

CARMEN SANDIEGO: SECRET OF THE STOLEN DRUMS | **70**

BAM! ■ NGC/92
Reasonable edutainment title, which sees junior gamers globetrotting after an art theif.

CASTLEWEEN | **16**

WANADOO ■ NGC/81
Unfairly difficult dismal platforming tedium with some kind of cartoony black magic schtick going on.

CEL DAMAGE | **60**

EA ■ NGC/66
Cel-shaded car-combat game in the vein of violent cartoons. Too manic and confusing for its own good.

CONFLICT DESERT STORM | **89**

SCI ■ NGC/80
Tense and teeth-gritting, with a great co-op mode. Brain-based fun for those nuclear winter evenings.

CRASH BANDICOOT THE WRATH OF CORTEX | **40**

VIVENDI ■ NGC/75
One of the worst ports we've seen – of a game that was a load of crap to begin with! Avoid like death.

CRASH NITRO KART | **53**

VIVENDI ■ NGC/89
The basic graphics and cheaty CPU karters are bad, but the loading times are ridiculous. Buy *Mario Kart*.

CRAZY TAXI | **70**

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67
A title that's so old, it's been included as a minigame in *GTAIII*. Creaky graphics, but still good fun.

DAKAR 2 79

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/80

Driving around in a vast expanse of dirt for days on end? *Dakar 2* manages to make this pretty good fun.

DARK SUMMIT 51

THQ ■ NGC/69

SSX Tricky with all the speed, style and entertainment removed with near-surgical precision. A waste of time.

DAVE MIRRA 2 FREESTYLE BMX 75

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67

Pornography-free, good, moto-cross game. Slick, with big arenas – but will only appeal to the BMX hardcore.

DIE HARD VENDETTA 80

VIVENDI ■ NGC/74

Shoot holes in people who look like terrorists, so the US can enjoy one more night of guiltless slumber.

DEAD TO RIGHTS 60

EA ■ NGC/83

Mindless ultraviolence. JACK SLATE is PISSED OFF and wants to HURT SOMEONE!

DEFENDER 50

MIDWAY ■ NGC/79

Pointless 3D update that makes one of the hardest-core arcade classics easy and, by extension, depressingly dull.

DEF JAM VENDETTA 87

MAJESCO ■ NGC/82

Wrestling thumpfest featuring all your favourite hip-hop artistes. Bone-crunching moves and 'sick' beats.

DISNEY'S EXTREME SKATE ADVENTURE 74

DISNEY ■ NGC/85

Neither extreme nor adventurous, but fine for people not up to *Tony Hawk's*, like your little brother or nan.

DISNEY'S HIDE & SNEAK 25

CAPCOM ■ NGC/92

The Mouse hides in things and sneaks past enemies. Stealth-action without any action. Tedious. Terrible.

DISNEY'S MAGICAL MIRROR 26

DISNEY ■ NGC/73

The Mouse patronises his way through this hideous 'adventure'. Almost Beckettian in its non-eventfulness.

DISNEY SPORTS BASKETBALL 55

KONAMI ■ NGC/82

Strip away the franchise and it's another simple Sports title. Soon to follow: *Disney Sports Russian Roulette.*

DISNEY SPORTS FOOTBALL 69

KONAMI ■ NGC/76

This isn't anywhere near as bad as you may think. It's an amusing, simple footie game for younger gamers.

DISNEY'S PARTY 56

EA ■ NGC/86

Mickey and chums in a mildly entertaining party game – but would you pay £30 to be mildly entertained?

DISNEY SPORTS SKATEBOARDING 64

KONAMI ■ NGC/80

The Mouse and his irritating friends try 'busting tricks'. Walt must be spinning in his cryogenic pod.

DONALD DUCK GOIN' QUACKERS 32

UBI SOFT ■ NGC/68

Like *Crash Bandicoot*, but with The Duck in charge, going bthackakackth. Also total rubbish.

TOP FIVE FIGHTING GAMES

SOUL CALIBUR 2
Gorgeous Link-fuelled beat-'em-up from fight kings Namco.

SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE
All your favourite Ninty types pounding each other's faces in.

VIEWTIFUL JOE
The only one-player beat-'em-up in our top five. Stunning.

DEF JAM VENDETTA
The wrestling game that appeals to non-grapple fans as well.

MK DEADLY ALLIANCE
"Mind if I remove your spleen?" "Ooh, go on – finish me."

TOP FIVE SHOOTING GAMES

METROID PRIME
Tough as nails shooting-heavy sci-fi adventure.

TIME-SPLITTERS 2
Class first-person shooting from the *GoldenEye* boys.

STAR WARS ROGUE LEADER
Looks great and lacks the ropy on-foot sections of the sequel.

XIII
Euro-shooter with comic-book looks and very serious violence.

IKARUGA
A pure arcade shooter that's tougher than most.

DOSHIN THE GIANT 62

NINTENDO ■ NGC/74

Quirky title that puts you in charge of a giant man who must help/hinder islanders. A little short-lived.

DRAGON BALL Z: BUDOKAI 43

ATARI ■ NGC/87

Dated fighter where the characters move as though their feet are lead-plated. Avoid even if you're a DBZ fan.

DRAGON'S LAIR 3D 48

THQ ■ NGC/91

As fiendishly unforgiving as the original, but no fun at all. For nostalgia freaks only.

DRIVEN 60

BAM ■ NGC/68

Very basic, short game of the bad film about driving fast in a circle. Filling up bargain bins as we speak.

DR MUTO 70

MIDWAY ■ NGC/79

Amusing mad-doctor platforming game where you have to mutate into different animals to solve puzzles.

DROME RACERS 46

EA ■ NGC/85

Brings absolutely nothing new to racing, and doesn't manage to do the old stuff with any flair either.

EGGO MANIA 49

KEMCO ■ NGC/72

Rubbish take on *Tetris* that, mystifyingly, involves ovulations. Wouldn't look out of place on an Amiga.

ENTER THE MATRIX 73

ATARI ■ NGC/81

Take the red pill and find out how disappointing this movie tie-in is. We were expecting something special.

ESPN INTERNATIONAL WINTER SPORTS 2002 37

KONAMI ■ NGC/67

Combines tiresome button-mashing with equally dull timing and precision exercises. Dull.

ETERNAL DARKNESS 89

EA ■ NGC/74

A Lovecraftian yarn of ancient evils told through 12 playable characters and an innovative magic system.

EVOLUTION SKATEBOARDING 78

KONAMI ■ NGC/79

Snazzy-looking *Hawk's* clone, but then, who wants an Elvis impersonator if the King's in town?

EVOLUTION SNOWBOARDING 23

KONAMI ■ NGC/79

Fight bad guys while sliding down a hill. Worse than *Dark Summit.* Games like this should be made illegal.

EXTREME G3 85

ACCLAIM ■ NGC/67

An underrated gem, offering speed, huge tracks, ingenious weaponry and eye-sparkling visuals.

F1 2002 67

EA ■ NGC/71

Rock-hard racing your dad will enjoy. Also features humourless Hun driving robot Schumacher version 1.0.

F1 CAREER CHALLENGE 81

EA ■ NGC/83

Packed representation of the glamorous world of F1 team management. You can take the cars for a spin too.

FIFA FOOTBALL 2003 83

EA ■ NGC/75

EA finally remember how good football games are made. Actually better than *ISS 2.* A vast improvement.

FIFA FOOTBALL 2004 85

EA ■ NGC/87

It wasn't broken, but EA fixed it anyway, slinging in more stats, new animations and a great Career mode.

FINAL FANTASY CRYSTAL CHRONICLES 86

NINTENDO ■ NGC/91

Beautiful looking, but with expensive hardware needs. An ambitious multiplayer RPG that mostly works.

FINDING NEMO 65

THQ ■ NGC/86

Horrible loading times and stuttering graphics spoil what could have been enjoyable for rugrat gamers.

FIREBLADE 59

MIDWAY ■ NGC/77

Brain-free 'copter game that'll appeal to military-obsessed psychos and fans of 80s Vietnam war films.

FREEDOM FIGHTERS 83

IO ■ NGC/86

Blast invading Russian commies intent on taking over the US. Realistic? Not on your nelski. Fun? Oh da.

FROGGER BEYOND 59

KONAMI ■ NGC/80

The trend for 'improving' ancient games by making them 3D taken to its most extreme conclusion.

GAUNTLET: DARK LEGACY 25

MIDWAY ■ NGC/68

We'd be far more comfortable with this if we'd had it inserted rectally. An insult to the memory of a classic.

GLADIUS 70

ACTIVISION ■ NGC/88

Persevere with the tutorials and odd glitches – there's a rewarding strategy title buried under the graphics.

GOBLIN COMMANDER UNLEASH THE HORDE 72

JALECO ■ NGC/92

Lead your rather small army of grunts to victory in this entertaining (if slightly simple) RTS.

GODZILLA: DESTROY ALL MONSTERS MELEE 68

ATARI ■ NGC/74

Stompy monster fun in multiplayer mode, but otherwise a little weak. Get *Smash Bros* instead.

GOTCHA FORCE 69

CAPCOM ■ NGC/90

Repetitive robot collect-'em-up battler which is actually pretty good fun, if a tad simple and repetitive.

HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS 78

EA ■ NGC/75

Attractive and competent adaptation of Potter's film – but rather easy. Only die-hard wizard fans need apply.

HARRY POTTER AND THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE 70

EA ■ NGC/89

Out on PS2 before *CoS*, now out on Cube with graphics nabbed from *CoS*. At least the game's simple…

HARRY POTTER QUIDDITCH WORLD CUP 62

EA ■ NGC/88

Potter fans will love the details, but as a sports game, this broom-based title is one to sweep under the rug…

DIRECTORY

Every Gamecube game ever… rated!



THE HOBBIT — 58
VIVENDI ■ NGC/88
Competent enough cutesy adventure but somehow not interesting, despite elves and dragons and dwarves.

HOT WHEELS HIGHWAY 35 WORLD RACE — 33
THQ ■ NGC/90
Ugly, gaudy and slow racer. Oh, and the handling's rubbish. Too boring to have a place on your Cube.

HOT WHEELS VELOCITY X — 45
THQ ■ NGC/75
Basic racing/car-combat game based on plastic toys. Strictly for the very, very young. Or very stupid.

HULK — 65
VIVENDI ■ NGC/82
Get angry, turn green, and SMASH your way through puny soldiers. Also stealth sections with Bruce Banner.

IKARUGA — 85
ATARI ■ NGC/80
Old-style shooter – originally designed for robots, now available for human consumption. Very, *very* hard.

ISS 2 — 83
KONAMI ■ NGC/68
A winning formula tarnished with unnecessary 'improvements'. Good – but also a step backwards.

ISS 3 — 78
KONAMI ■ NGC/82
The once-invincible football series sinks ever lower with a misguided new 'close-up' mode.

THE ITALIAN JOB: LA HEIST — 54
EIDOS ■ NGC/85
So short, even games goobers can finish it. The lack of variety doesn't help. A mini game in every respect.

JAMES BOND 007 AGENT UNDER FIRE — 70
EA ■ NGC/70
Workaday gameplay dressed up in off-the-peg shooter upholstery, shooting baddies with ping-pong balls.

JAMES BOND 007 EVERYTHING OR NOTHING — 68
EA ■ NGC/91
Barely above average, this not-based-on-a-film film tie-in is only redeemed by 007's winning personality.

JAMES BOND 007: NIGHTFIRE — 72
EA ■ NGC/75
The best Bond game on Gamecube so far, but the visuals can't hide an FPS that's lacking overall.

JEDI KNIGHT II — 67
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
A seriously disappointing PC conversion of an overrated shooter. Huge game, but quite tedious.

JEREMY MCGRATH SUPERCROSS WORLD — 20
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/69
Like a nightmare about doing cross-country wearing nothing but steel-wool pants and wire flip-flops.

JIMMY NEUTRON BOY GENIUS — 18
THQ ■ NGC/78
Tedious, sorry, devoid-of-inspiration 'puzzle' game that actually manages to out–borify *Universal Studios.*

JIMMY NEUTRON JET FUSION — 71
THQ ■ NGC/89
Jimmy's second game is a big improvement. A simple platformer good for younger gamers.

JUDGE DREDD DREDD VS DEATH — 84
VIVENDI ■ NGC/89
An atmospheric, exciting shooter made better by the presence of the Big Chin himself, Judge Dredd. Drokk!

KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER — 75
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/73
Same old trick-based extreme-sports, but this time in tubes made of water. Quite good fun, for a while.

KNOCKOUT KINGS 2003 — 79
EA ■ NGC/75
If the arcadey nature of *Rocky* doesn't sit that well with you, give this face-smashing simulator a go instead.

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING — 47
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/69
Bringing back old-skool 'rasslers' isn't enough to make this any good. A shambolic licensing cash-cow.

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING II — 50
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/76
Yet another travesty of a wrestling game, but made marginally better by the addition of Big Daddy.

LOONEY TUNES BACK IN ACTION — 56
EA ■ NGC/90
Irritating monkey-collecting platformer. You'll find yourself wearing a tinfoil hat to stop all the voices.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS THE RETURN OF THE KING — 86
EA ■ NGC/87
More playable characters, including Gandalf, and less button-mashing make an epic, very enjoyable sequel.

TOP FIVE ADVENTURE/ RPGS

ZELDA: THE WIND WAKER
Phenomenal. A reason to own Gamecube itself.

METROID PRIME
Tough as nails shooting-heavy sci-fi adventure. Again.

PHANTASY STAR ONLINE
A number-cruncher that turns epic with a bit of t'internet.

SKIES OF ARCADIA LEGENDS
If 'classic' RPGs are your bag, this boy'll be a sackful of joy.

LOST KINGDOMS II
Polished RPG with card collecting elements. Neat.

TOP FIVE ACTION ADVENTURE



HITMAN 2
Compelling assassin sim that kills the competition dead.

RESIDENT EVIL
A superior zombie-cruncher with slightly niggly controls.

ETERNAL DARKNESS
Another Nintendo exclusive that never fails to entertain.

SPLINTER CELL
Captivating stealth-laced adventure from the hand of Clancy.

RESIDENT EVIL 0
Not as good as those titles up there, but it's still dead good fun.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS THE TWO TOWERS — 68
EA ■ NGC/78
Repetitive hacking game with RPG overtones. Guide your man through levels making goblin prosciutto.

LOST KINGDOMS — 86
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/70
Collect, er, cards, and battle monsters with them in fantasy landscapes. The sequel does it better, though.

LOST KINGDOMS 2 — 87
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/81
Set 200 years after the events of the first game. It's more satisfying, but it's still on the frothy side.

LUIGI'S MANSION — 88
NINTENDO ■ NGC/67
Luigi stars in this short, but ace, fantastically playable combination of *Super Mario World* and *Ghostbusters.*

MADDEN NFL 2004 — 87
EA ■ NGC/85
Great stuff – a satisfying and accessible version of the sport for new *and* experienced Yankee Egg Chasers.

MARIO PARTY 4 — 68
NINTENDO ■ NGC/75
Disappointing. Not bad if you're in the mood for party fun, but it's done little to improve on the originals.

MARIO PARTY 5 — 80
NINTENDO ■ NGC/89
A much better boardgame from Mazza, although the new Capsule system can slow things down a lot.

MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX 2 — 70
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
A decent extreme sports sim. A bit slicker than *Dave Mirra*, but with smaller, tighter arenas. Does the job.

MEDAL OF HONOR FRONTLINE — 74
EA ■ NGC/75
FPS set during World War II. Looks ropy in places, but it's atmospheric and highly enjoyable.

MEDAL OF HONOR RISING SUN — 67
EA ■ NGC/88
Looks so old, it should come with Werthers Originals, and both allies and enemies are a bit thick. Disappointing.

MEGA MAN NETWORK TRANSMISSION — 59
CAPCOM ■ NGC/84
Here's an idea: take a great GBA game, strip the good bits out and put the resulting platformer on GC.

MEN IN BLACK II ALIEN ESCAPE — 45
ATARI ■ NGC/78
Rubbish off-the-peg third-person shooting game of the rubbish off-the-peg movie. Did we mention it's rubbish?

METAL ARMS GLITCH IN THE SYSTEM — 82
VIVENDI ■ NGC/88
Well-designed bottylicious shooter. It's big and it's extremely tough. And we all love robots with guns, eh?

MICRO MACHINES — 57
ATARI ■ NGC/78
Like the recipe for bread or wine gums, *Micro Machines* doesn't change much, and this iteration is no exception.

MINORITY REPORT — 39
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/77
Astonishingly brutal third-rate ass-whupping game that takes place on the sets of a Spielberg movie.

MORTAL KOMBAT DEADLY ALLIANCE 80
MIDWAY ■ NGC/77
The best *Kombat* yet! The blood-soaked spine-ripping yarn finally gets the update it deserves on Gamecube.

MX SUPERFLY 63
THQ ■ NGC/73
Handles like you're driving space bikes on the surface of the moon. The best of a very bad bunch, though.

MYSTIC HEROES 71
THQ ■ NGC/75
Simplistic 3D *Gauntlet*-style slasher that's somehow entertaining and charming. Well, Geraint thinks so.

NBA 2K3 85
ATARI ■ NGC/79
Puts all other basketball games to shame. Great gameplay complements an engrossing Career mode.

NBA COURTSIDE 2002 79
NINTENDO ■ NGC/68
The second-best basketball sim available, but it's still lacking. Strictly for hardcore fans of the Ball of B.

NBA LIVE 2003 70
EA ■ NGC/75
The yearly EA update. Solid gameplay; lots of lovely numbers; otherwise not much different from last year.

NBA LIVE 2004 86
EA ■ NGC/88
This year's *NBA Live* has tighter controls and a vastly improved Dynasty mode. A tab soulless, mind.

NBA STREET VOL 2 88
EA ■ NGC/85
Almost negates the need for realistic sports sims – and all for half the price of real basketball trainers.

NEED FOR SPEED 2 HOT PURSUIT 69
EA ■ NGC/74
Ironically slow racer. A lazy port has ruined what was originally a pretty entertaining franchise.

NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 77
EA ■ NGC/88
Aargh! I can't see… oh, that's the graphics. This street racer needs a bit more attention to detail, we feel.

NFL 2K3 86
ATARI ■ NGC/79
A meaty gridiron sim that could even threaten *Madden*. Management bits don't detract from the gameplay.

NFL STREET 79
EA ■ NGC/90
American footie hits the streets. The Challenge mode and four-player are great. It'll take ages if you're duff.

NHL 2003 64
EA ■ NGC/75
A realistic approach to ice hockey which isn't particularly fast or – more importantly – fun.

NHL 2004 57
EA ■ NGC/85
Behind-the-scenes additions don't compensate for the terrible frame rate on the ice. Play it at your peril.

NHL 2K3 72
ATARI ■ NGC/80
Complicated ice hockey title with stodgy gameplay. Similar to *NFL 2K3*, but doesn't quite pull it off.

TOP FIVE SPORTS SIMS

NBA STREET VOL 2
An off-the-wall b-ball title which puts more serious games to shame.

MADDEN NFL 2004
Forget soccer, Madden's still delivering the best pitch-based entertainment on the Gamecube.

NBA LIVE 2004
EA's superb 'serious' basketball title.

FIFA 2004
The best *FIFA* yet.

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2004
The final entry in our sports game listing is both a) another EA game and b) a golf game. It's ace.

TOP FIVE EXTREME SPORTS GAMES



1080° AVALANCHE
More refined and robust than *SSX*.

SSX3
Fantastic sequel with plenty of challenge. More stunts than *1080°* – but not *quite* as polished a racer.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3
Absorbing wheel-'em-up. *Tony Hawk's 4's* worth a look too.

AGGRESSIVE INLINE
Roller boot-based *Tony Hawk's* style action.

EVOLUTION SKATEBOARDING
Another *Hawk's* clone that'solidly put together.

NHL HITZ 20-02 79
MIDWAY ■ NGC/67
Exaggerated ice hockey title in a similar vein to *Red Card*, where the sticks aren't just for hitting the puck.

NHL HITZ 20-03 65
MIDWAY ■ NGC/74
Another year, another dose of frantic ice action. Not much cop on the original, mind.

PAC MAN WORLD 2 70
EA ■ NGC/78
The Pac is back for hilarious retro-themed platforming fun. Shamelessly pilfers everything from *Mario 64*.

PIKMIN 86
NINTENDO ■ NGC/80
Created using textures from Shigsy's own garden. A wonderful RTS with multicoloured vegetable men.

PITFALL THE LOST EXPEDITION 48
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/92
Colourful but short and shoddily-put-together platformer starring a hero from days of yore.

P.N.03 77
CAPCOM ■ NGC/84
This super-stylish shooter with its dancing heroine is only marred by dull bosses and design.

POKÉMON CHANNEL 24
NINTENDO ■ NGC/92
Watch really rubbish telly with Pika. Because that's what having a good time is all about…

POOL PARADISE 80
IGNITION ■ NGC/92
Actually quite good tropical-themed pool sim – and you're faced to play more than boring old nine-ball.

PRO RALLY 2002 58
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/74
An okay game completely and ruthlessly dragged down by its thoroughly awful, frustrating handling.

PRO TENNIS WTA TOUR 48
KONAMI ■ NGC/74
The only tennis game on 'Cube so far, but with rubbish non-analogue controls and distinctly whiffy visuals.

PUYO POP FEVER 80
SEGA ■ NGC/91
Blob-bursting puzzle fun. It's nothing very new, but still a great puzzle title. The sort of thing girls love.

RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP 74
SCI ■ NGC/78
Solid, does all the things a rallying game should. Should do the job until *McCrae* sees the light of day.

RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOC 84
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/78
The limbless French Freak™ has the last laugh with a game that, insists our correspondent, is actually good.

RED CARD 20-03 78
MIDWAY ■ NGC/71
Violent football game where you mince opponents with stud and fist until the meat shows.

RED FACTION 66
THQ ■ NGC/82
Shoot capitalist scum in the face and blow some holes in walls in this distinctly average brown fighting game.

REIGN OF FIRE 59
BAM ■ NGC/76
A poor game of a poor film, even if you do get to burn stuff. Nice ideas ruined by dodgy physics and controls.

RESIDENT EVIL ZERO 85
CAPCOM ■ NGC/78
Ditches the solo formula for a two-character system. Great set-pieces, looks lovely… more *Resi*, basically.

RESIDENT EVIL 89
CAPCOM ■ NGC/72
The classic zombie horror-fest, with stunning visuals and a brilliant storyline. Controls are still crap, though.



DIRECTORY

Every Gamecube game ever… rated!

RESIDENT EVIL 2 — 62
CAPCOM ■ NGC/81
Experience the shambling, undead terror of original PSone graphics! Revisit Leon and Claire for just… £30!

RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X — 70
CAPCOM ■ NGC/91
A very late post of this two-character game. Solid *Resi* gameplay and a great plot are the big draws.

RESIDENT EVIL: NEMESIS — 65
CAPCOM ■ NGC/81
Braaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii iiiiiiiinnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnssssssssssssssssssssss! Etcetera.

ROBOTECH BATTLECRY — 77
TDK ■ NGC/77
Stompy robots go to war in the game of the Japanese cartoon. Not bad, as far as stompy robot games go.

ROCKY — 78
RAGE ■ NGC/74
A solid fighter where you guide Rockies one to five to greatness. Top two-player, loads of unlockable extras.

ROGUE OPS — 62
KEMCO ■ NGC/90
The spirit of Joanna Dark lives on – but only just – in the form of Nikki Connors. Nowehere near as good, mind.

SCOOBY DOO NIGHT OF 100 FRIGHTS! — 36
THQ ■ NGC/74
Platforming non-action that'll interest you for half an hour or until you need the loo; whichever comes first.

THE SCORPION KING — 30
VIVENDI ■ NGC/75
Bad. Very bad. Guide a poor approximation of The Rock and hit bad guys until they bleed from the eyeholes.

SEGA SOCCER SLAM — 67
ATARI ■ NGC/74
A cartoonish footie game with an interest in violence. Cracking in multiplayer – poor on your own.

THE SIMPSONS: HIT & RUN — 80
VIVENDI ■ NGC/87
The Simpsons go all *GTA* and start driving recklessly and doling out the violence. And what's more, it works!

THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE — 52
EA ■ NGC/68
A bad *Crazy Taxi* rip-off, with Simpsons characters bolted on, spewing repetitive 'funny' one-liners.

THE SIMS — 81
EA ■ NGC/79
Addictive people simulating comes to the Cube. A great sense of humour and lots of potential for mischief.

THE SIMS BUSTIN' OUT — 72
EA ■ NGC/89
What's outside the house? Hmm? No longer is your sim confined to his own four walls. Agoraphobics beware.

SMUGGLER'S RUN WARZONES — 78
ROCKSTAR ■ NGC/73
Huge landscapes and fast-paced 'racing' in buggies is let down by repetitive gameplay and awful music.

SONIC ADVENTURE 2 BATTLE — 70
ATARI ■ NGC/67
Sega's annoying mascot on Gamecube, now with an extra dimension added. Does anyone care any more?

SONIC ADVENTURE DX DIRECTOR'S CUT — 38
ATARI ■ NGC/83
A GBA link-up feature for GC, but otherwise a straight port of a game that was rubbish to begin with.

SONIC HEROES — 52
SEGA ■ NGC/91
We *don't* hate Sonic, but if he keeps dishing out these woefully inadequate platformers we might start to.

SONIC MEGA COLLECTION — 70
ATARI ■ NGC/79
If you have a retro craving, you could do worse: seven games on one disc, accurate down to the loading times!

SPEED KINGS — 57
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/83
Wannabe *Burnout* with, strangely, lots of sliding under lorries involved. Otherwise bland and unnecessary.

SPIDER-MAN THE MOVIE — 72
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/69
Dodgy control and camera are the only problems with this platform adventure. Voiced by the original cast.

SPY HUNTER — 55
MIDWAY ■ NGC/68
Appaling frame-rate, nasty course design and linear racing make this one to avoid. A pointless remake.

SPYRO: ENTER THE DRAGONFLY — 40
VIVENDI ■ NGC/75
Much like *Crash Bandicoot*, this is another shoddy port of a game that was never much fun in the first place.



TOP FIVE MULTI-PLAYER GAMES



MARIO KART DOUBLE DASH!!
The Best Multiplayer Game Ever. We still haven't stopped playing it.

WORMS 3D
Ace fun with ludicrous weapons and a rising tide.

FINAL FANTASY CRYSTAL CHRONICLES
An innovative approach to multiplayer adventuring.

ATSUMARE MADE IN WARIO
Wario Ware made big and multiplayer for the Gamecube. Only available on import, but worth it.

SUPER MONKEY BALL
The second one's slightly better, but they're both really good monkey-rolling fun.

SSX TRICKY — 87
EA ■ NGC/69
Has PS2 written all over it, but excellent. Fast courses, shortcuts and mid-piste scrappage equal FUN.

STAR WARS BOUNTY HUNTER — 68
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/77
The panting, pot-bellied, rubbish space-assassin gets the *Tomb Raider* treatment in this average game.

STAR WARS THE CLONE WARS — 71
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
Battlezone-style tank blaster set around Episode II – not as good as *Rogue Leader*, but fun all the same.

STAR WARS ROGUE LEADER — 87
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/68
The most memorable – and the best-looking – Star Wars game yet. The Battle of Hoth will melt your eyes.

STAR WARS: ROGUE SQUADRON 3: REBEL STRIKE — 83
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/88
On-foot bits? Star Wars is about whizzing around in spaceships, not saving some bint with padded ears.

STARFOX ADVENTURES — 72
NINTENDO ■ NGC/74
Adventure that's way too easy and linear. Should have been far better. Hardly a fitting send-off for Rare.

SPAWN ARMAGEDDON — 52
NAMCO ■ NGC/91
Plays like *Devil May Cry*, but nowhere near as good. Lock on, jump, fight, win, look for next fight…

SPHINX AND THE CURSED MUMMY — 69
EUROCOM ■ NGC/91
Some seemingly careless flaws ruin an otherwise fun game – and you're going to love that Mummy!

SPLINTER CELL — 89
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/81
Stealth-fest with a gritty feel and the opportunity to operate various Clancy-approved hi-tech gizmos.

SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS BATTLE FOR BIKINI BOTTOM — 32
THQ ■ NGC/89
The plot's weak and the levels are badly designed – and Spongebob himself is nauseating.

THE SUM OF ALL FEARS — 25
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/76
One of the most inept games we've played. Clancy says bury the copies in the desert before anyone notices.

SUMMONER A GODDESS REBORN — 68
THQ ■ NGC/79
Much levelling-up and numbers floating from people's heads. Crappy visuals, but an engrossing adventure.

SUPER BUBBLE POP — 65
JALECO ■ NGC/78
Tetris-y flavoured *Bust-a-Move* for the Sunny Delight generation, with chemically-induced visuals and music.

SUPER BUST-A-MOVE ALL STARS — 70
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/89
Bust-A-Move! On your Gamecube! Puzzle fans rejoice – but only buy it if you haven't got a version already.

SUPERMAN: SHADOW OF APOKOLIPS — 60
ATARI ■ NGC/81
Supes redeems himself somewhat with this stylised and maze-free effort based on the animated cartoons.

SUPER MONKEY BALL — **88**
ATARI ■ NGC/67
Simian-flavoured update of *Marble Madness*. One of the weirdest, most wonderful Gamecube games around.

SUPER MONKEY BALL 2 — **82**
ATARI ■ NGC/78
The apes are back with levels harder of core, and a new story mode involving love, betrayal and banana-theft.

SX SUPERSTAR — **71**
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/83
Motocross scrambling, enhanced with a *Def Jam*-style Career mode that involves girlfriend upgrades.

TAK & THE POWER OF JUJU — **69**
THQ ■ NGC/92
Ticks all the right platforming boxes and is pleasant enough. But exciting? Not remotely.

TARZAN FREERIDE — **59**
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/67
Disney. Platformer. Need we say any more? Jungle-based gameplay with the Seventh Earl of Greystoke.

TAZ WANTED — **52**
ATARI ■ NGC/72
Some of the worst level design we've ever seen in this frustrating cel-shaded *Mario*-wannabe platformer.

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES — **40**
KONAMI ■ NGC/92
Pick a turtle. Any turtle. They're all the same. A shallow button-basher that should've stayed in the sewer.

TETRIS WORLDS — **38**
THQ ■ NGC/73
THQ ruin one of the Best Games Ever by trying to make it 'better'. Will anyone stop these people?

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2003 — **82**
EA ■ NGC/75
The world most efficient golf robot gets his own game. Actually really good, in a surprisingly arcadey way.

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2004 — **84**
EA ■ NGC/86
Apart from the ginormous size and a few tweaks for stattoes, it's the same as the last one.

TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON — **66**
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/79
Clancy has another go at squad-based tactical ops, and this time things run more smoothly. Entertaining stuff.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3 — **87**
ACTIVISION NGC/67
Mental grinds and stunts backed up by a mountain of extras – if you haven't tried *Hawk's*, do it now.

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4 — **85**
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
No time limits and great RPG elements complement the larger areas in *TH4* – a well-tweaked fourquel.

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND — **79**
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/88
The latest Hawk's lacks visual polish but the Story mode's been massively improved.

TOP ANGLER — **35**
XICAT ■ NGC/81
Generic fishing game involving bass, that doesn't even get the basics of its limited genre right. Tiresome.

PAUL'S SENSE TALK

LOCATION
In any given situation, just remember, no matter where you are, there you are. Got it?

DEEP, DUDE!
Once you can accept the universe as matter expanding into nothing that is something, wearing stripes with plaid comes easy.
Albert Einstein

DRAG, MAN
You know the old Austin Allegro your grandad used to drive? They were actually more aerodynamic going backwards. It's true!

MOTORSPORT MUMS
Do you think Colin McRae's mum ever tells him that he shouldn't go driving about so fast?

CONMEN
If a man comes to your front door, says he's conducting a survey, and asks you to show him your arse, do not show him your arse. This is a scam. He only wants to see your arse. I wish someone had warned me. I feel so stupid and cheap.

Do you have more 'sense' than our Sense Master Paul Edwards? You probably do! He wants your Sense Talks, mate!

Send them to him at **paul.edwards@futurenet.co.uk** or to Sense Talk at the usual address.

TOP GUN: COMBAT ZONES — **71**
VIRGIN ■ NGC/72
Movie-based flyboy antics. GC's only flight 'sim' – pretty challenging, but we recommend you try it first.

TY THE TASMANIAN TIGER — **60**
EA ■ NGC/76
An average platformer with an Antipodean twist. It's a solid example of the genre but nothing more or less.

TUROK EVOLUTION — **71**
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/73
Disappointing dino-hunting FPS sequel. Not as bad as *Turok 3* on N64, but serious niggles let the series down.

TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA — **75**
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/88
Looks great, but can be fiddlier than a violinists' convention. As close as you'll get to *GTA* on 'Cube.

UFC THROWDOWN — **51**
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/73
Freestyle thump-fest, where you lead your oily man to victory in some Greek-style athletic contest.

UNIVERSAL STUDIOS — **24**
KEMCO ■ NGC/67
Anyone who makes a game involving picking up litter should be stuffed into a suitcase and hurled into the sea.

URBAN FREESTYLE SOCCER — **17**
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/91
The characters are loathsome and the animation's terrible. A new low for Gamecube sports games.

V-RALLY 3 — **68**
ATARI ■ NGC/82
Speedy rallying game that wouldn't be so bad if they'd concentrated on the basics first. Like, er, the steering.

VIRTUA STRIKER 3 V2002 — **55**
ATARI ■ NGC/69
Nice to look at, horrible to play. Rubbish AI and unwieldy controls make for a bobbins game of footie.

WALLACE & GROMIT IN PROJECT ZOO — **70**
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/87
Recreates the plasticene duo's world brilliantly. Only a few fiddly bits let this youngsters' platformer down.

WARIO WORLD — **86**
NINTENDO ■ NGC/83
The anti-Mario gets his own game. A surreal frenzy of lowbrow humour and monster-hitting. Waah!

WORMS BLAST — **63**
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/74
Kinda like *Bust-a-Move* in a puzzly-action kind of way, except this isn't anywhere near as good.

WRECKLESS THE YAKUZA MISSIONS — **51**
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
Drive like a loon and smash up cars and anything else that gets in your way. Sub-*Burnout* nonsense.

WWE CRUSH HOUR — **43**
THQ ■ NGC/83
Those magnificent greasy men drive greasy fighting machines for some unlikely *Vigilante 8*-style 'thrills'.

WWE WRESTLEMANIA X8 — **70**
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/72
Okay, but with nothing particularly new and a familiar engine. But if you insist on buying these things…

WWE WRESTLEMANIA XIX — **68**
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/85
Clumsy interface, limited CAW parts and irritating Story mode. Still, it'll sell loads, no matter what its flaws are.

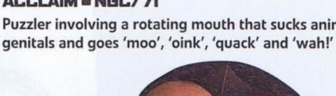
XGRA — **71**
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/89
Okay future racer, hampered by the fact that it's come out at nearly the same time as the superior *F-Zero GX*.

XIII — **86**
UBI SOFT ■ NGC/88
A flawed gem of a shooter. Rock-hard in places, with wonderful set pieces and comic-book-style graphics.

X-MEN: NEXT DIMENSION — **55**
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/75
Duller than dishwater. Fighting-by-numbers stuff that offers little of interest. Waste of a pretty cool licence.

X-MEN 2 WOLVERINE'S REVENGE — **64**
ACTIVISION ■ NGC/82
Is he a man? Is he a wolf? Is he a genetically engineered super-soldier? Fighting with the clawed X-Man.

ZOOCUBE — **50**
ACCLAIM ■ NGC/71
Puzzler involving a rotating mouth that sucks animal genitals and goes 'moo', 'oink', 'quack' and 'wah!'





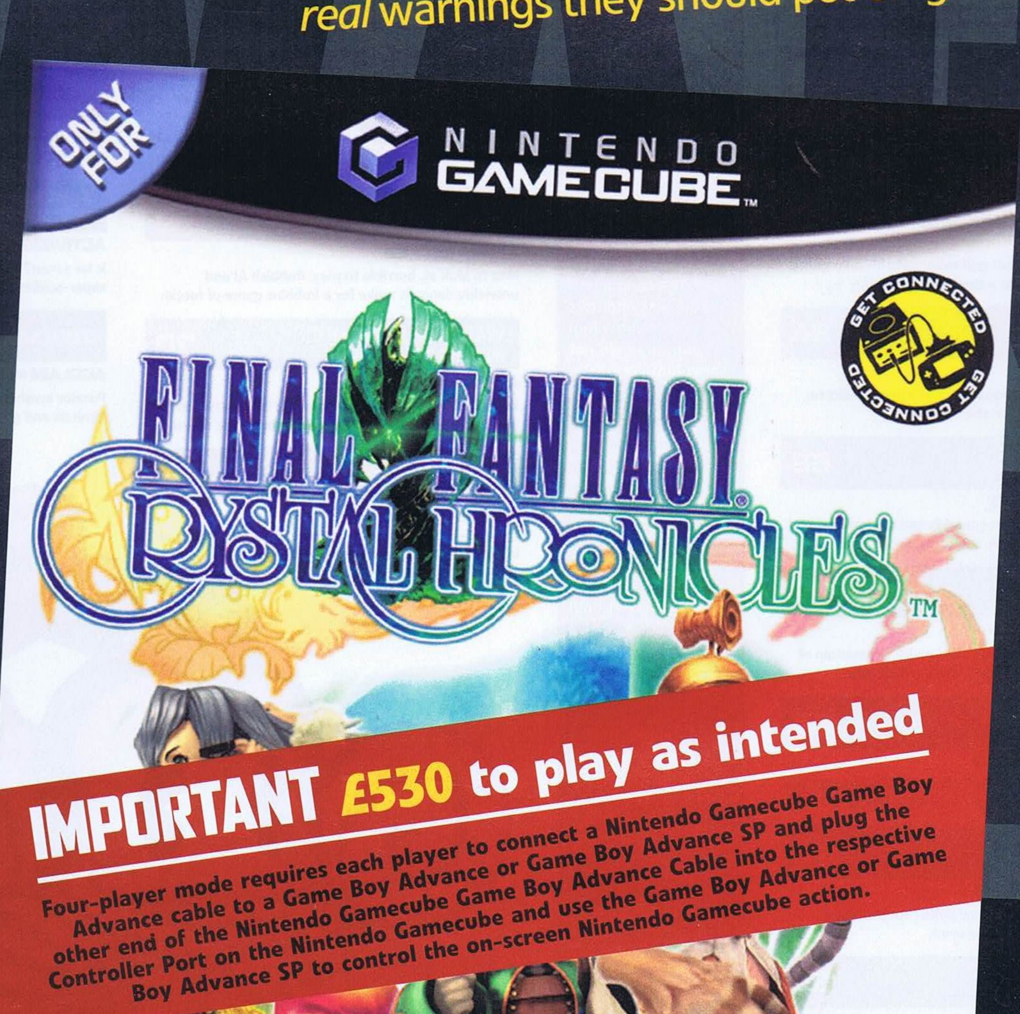


MAY NOT BE ANY GOOD

WARNING

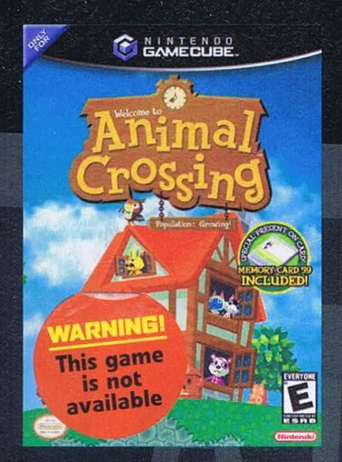
MAY NOT BE ANY GOOD

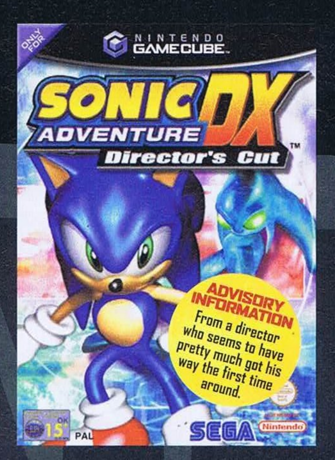
Cartoon violence? Over 18s only? Pah. These are the *real* warnings they should put on game boxes.

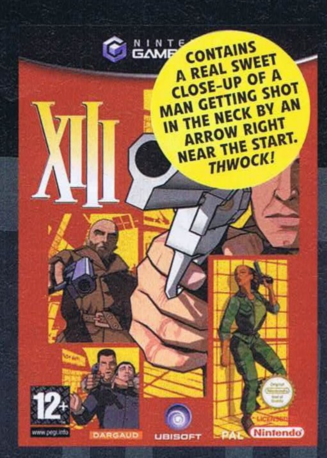


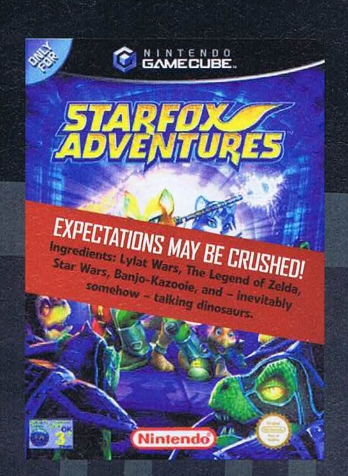
WHAT IF...

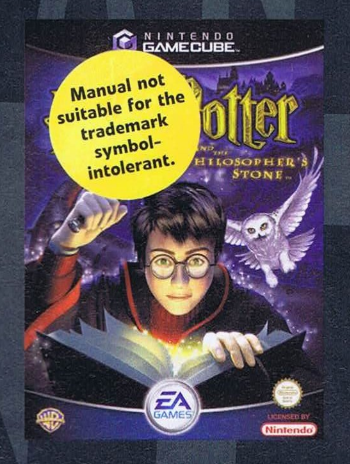
You got *useful* warning labels on games?



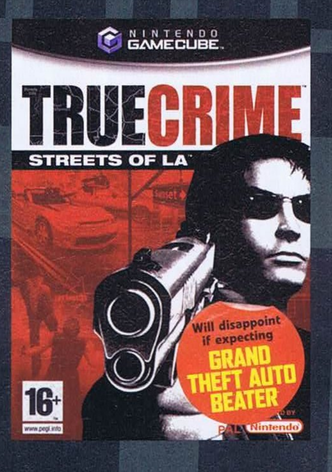




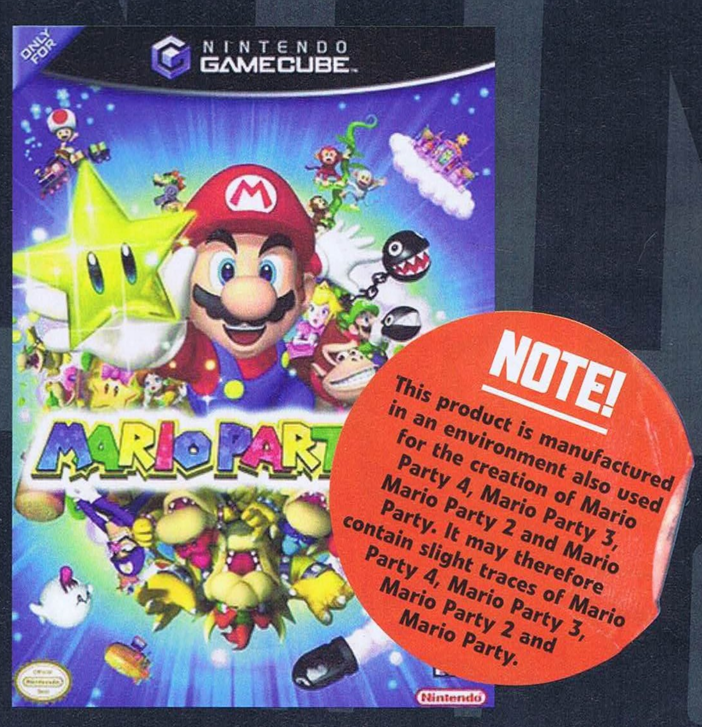


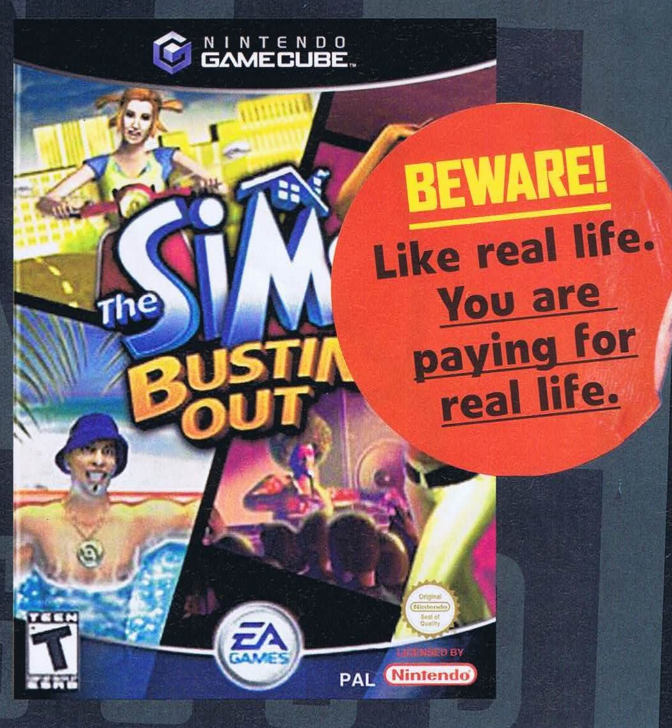












PEGI RATINGS EXPLAINED

The truth behind those mystifying new ratings icons.


Ten-pin bowling scenes may offend.


Includes scenes of an intense medical nature or crashing rockets.


This game suitable only for spiders.


The third level of *Ikaruga*.


Pop star Prince's approval/ Swindon-based driving scenes.



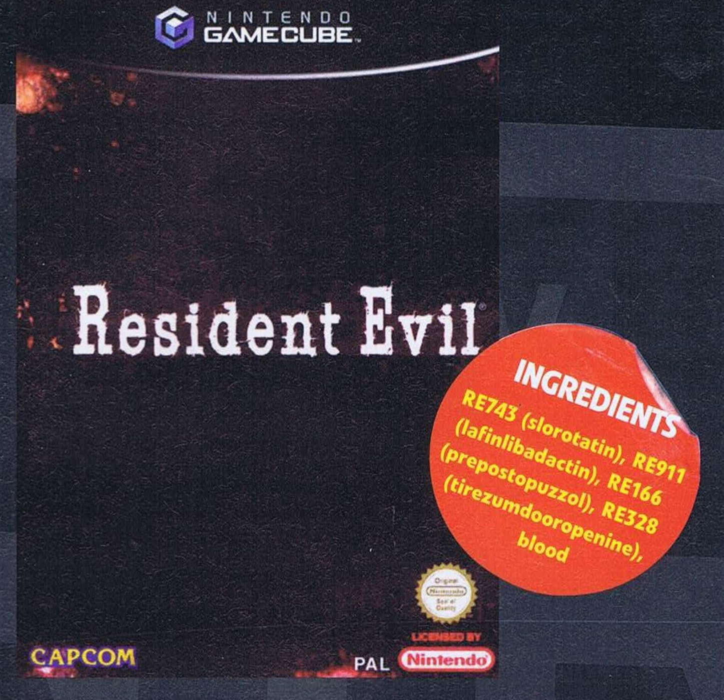
This game is Q-Bert or features subtitles in txtmsg.

WHAT IF...
You got *useful* warning labels on games?

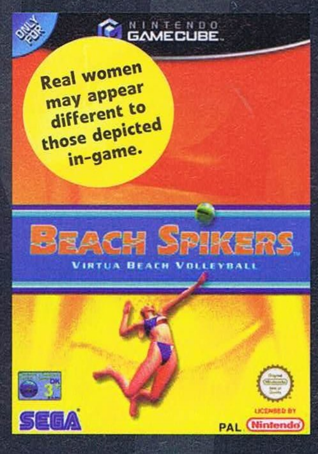


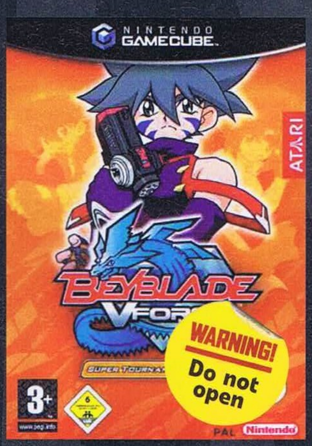
WHAT IF...

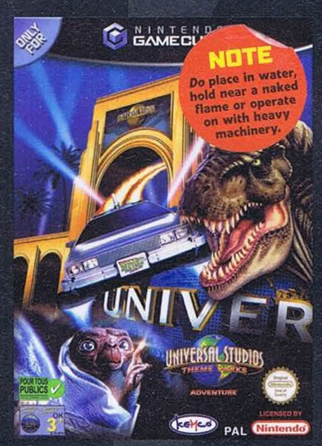
You got *useful* warning labels on games?

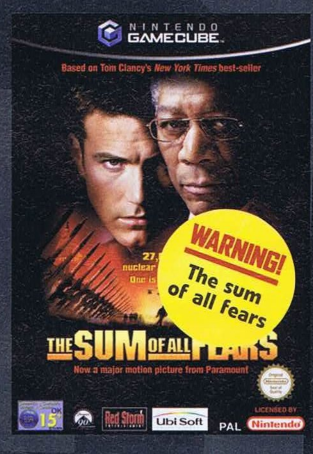


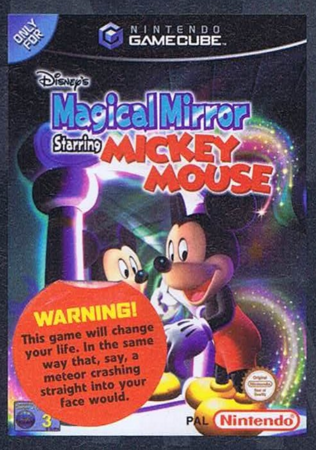






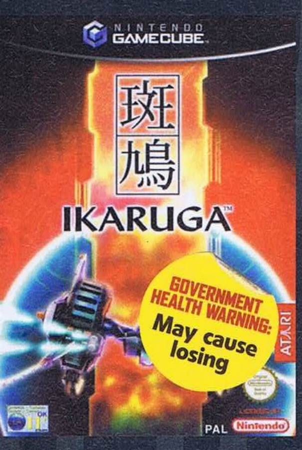












FOR STORE USE ONLY

Cut-out warning stickers for you to stick on games in your local store. Rebel! Provide a public service! Get taken in for questioning!

AFTER FIRST PLAY, STORE IN A DARK PLACE	CAUTION! CONTAINS DIDDY KONG	MAY CAUSE DROWSINESS	WARNING! FRENCH	NOT HALF AS GOOD AS THE MOVIE	NOT HALF AS BAD AS THE MOVIE



In the new issue of
TOTAL FILM
THE EPIC ISSUE
From Spartacus to Gladiator,
cinema's grandest movies...
Plus Brad Pitt gets skirty
in the most expensive shoot
in Hollywood history
ON SALE THURSDAY 22 APRIL

EXPERT TIPS, TOUGH CHALLENGES, TRIVIA AND MORE

NGC EXTENDED PLAY

DON'T MISS...



Turn the good life into the Wonderful Life with our *Harvest Moon* tips P88

CONTENTS

A concise guide to the informative guts within...

CHECK IT!...



△ COMPENDIUM: Crabby old witch Madame Greener looks into the future of Nintendo.



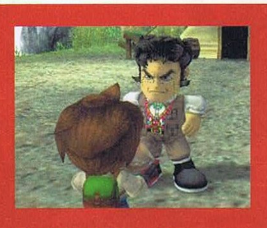
△ MAILBOX: Complaints, nags and grumbles. And some nice bits too. Yes. We like those.



Make a fortune and marry a beauty in...

HARVEST MOON A WONDERFUL LIFE





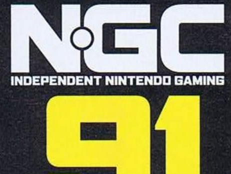
WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

This gorgeous farming and dating RPG went straight to the top of the Gamecube charts when it was released, then promptly vanished from the shelves. If you're lucky enough to track down a copy during this period of relative scarcity, buy it with confidence. It's one of the most absorbing and adorable things on any console, and with multiple endings depending on how hard you work at building your virtual life there's a lot of replay value. Although with each play-through taking around 100 hours, you'll have to be a devoted farmer to see it all. It's unique.



WHAT WE SAID IN ISSUE 91!

A magical experience you're never likely to forget, and the best game in a series that's never been less than excellent. The surefire antidote to all known forms of Jaded Gamer Syndrome.



ANIMAL MAGIC

How to get those rare and unusual beasties.



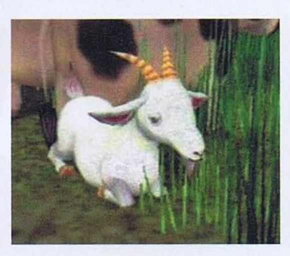
DUCKS

Pay Takakura to build you a pond in the first year. Make sure you have space in your chicken hut (no more than six chickens) and wake up late one day in the summer of chapter two. You'll have a pair of ducks to look after.



CATS

Fed up with your manky old dog? Be nice to Romana during the early stages of the game and she'll bring you one of her spare cats if you wake up late one day in the autumn of chapter two.



GOATS

You can order these from Van's store in the spring from chapter two onwards. They're fairly useless, though.



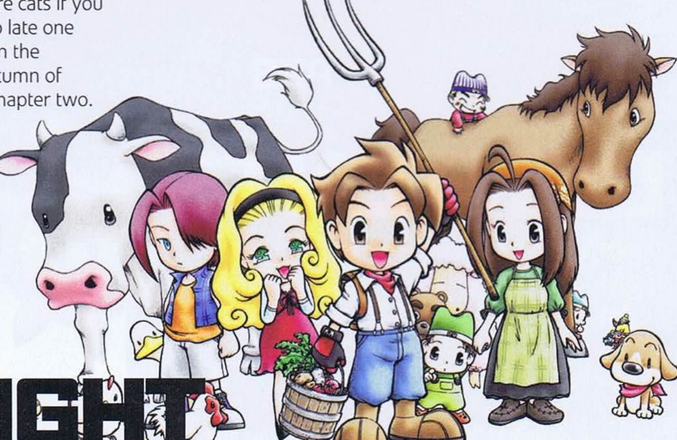
MINI DOG

Find plenty of good stuff for Carter at the dig site and he'll eventually give you his miniature chihuahua rat-dog.

NGC TOP TIP

GOAT KILLER

Stuck with a goat that won't give milk? Simply leave it outside and neglect it for a year until it dies!



LADIES' NIGHT

Pick one – but remember, it's for life!



MUFFY

Muffy is your best bet if you want a quick, easy courtship – this girl moves fast. She can usually be found at the bar during opening hours, or down by the river bridge on her evenings off. Bring her a wild flower or some shiny bit of junk from the mine every day and she'll be yours.
Diary location: In the plant pot at the bar



CELIA

Celia is the default bride – she already works on a farm, she's a great cook, and if you don't bother wooing anybody then she'll marry you anyway at the end of the first chapter. To do things properly, bring her wild flowers and show her the best vegetables you've grown.
Diary location: Under her bed



NAMI

Nami is the sulky one who doesn't really like anything, particularly people. If that sounds like your ideal match, get down the mine and gather enough skull fossils to present Nami with one per day. When you reach the autumn she'll also accept gifts of wild flowers.
Diary location: On the table in her room

CASH PILE

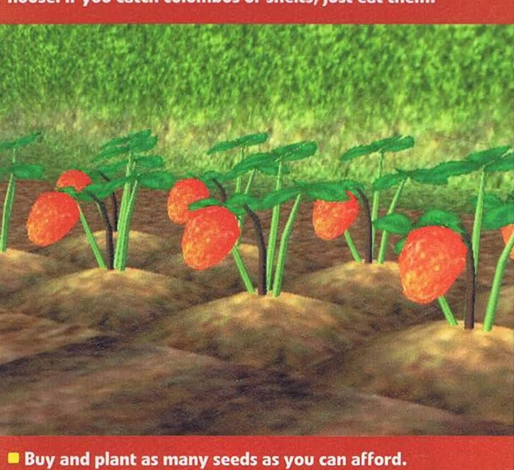
Making a significant amount of money is painfully tough at first. But with these money-making tips you'll have no trouble bringing in enough cash to buy all the seeds and equipment you need.



■ Forage for wild plants. When you've gathered a whole season's worth of flowers, mushrooms and other free veggies, flog them to Van and rake in a couple of grand.



■ Fish for sharsharks. Big ones fetch 1,200G each, and you can catch them by fishing from the river bridge near Vesta's house. If you catch colombos or snelts, just eat them.



■ Buy and plant as many seeds as you can afford. Completely filling the big field with a multi-season crop such as tomatoes may drain your resources for a season but the rewards are substantial.

COW TROUBLE

Making the best of your bovine investments.

Cows are the most profitable animals you can buy, but they'll only give milk for a maximum of 40 days. When they dry up you'll have to introduce them to a bull or give them a miracle potion to get them pregnant. After the calf is born you'll get another 40 days of delicious milk. To get the best quality milk from your herd, follow these simple tips:



1. Brush your cows every day, preferably in front of the trough. Clean cows produce the best milk.

2. Give them a hug before milking them. One hug per day should be sufficient, mind.

3. Milk them twice a day. If you don't milk them, they'll burst apart in a shower of raw beef and cream.

4. Leave them outside on days when the weather is good.

5. Always keep the fodder buckets completely topped up.

GONE TO SEED

Orchard plus seeds equals huge profit for young farmers.

Getting the seed maker gadget is one route to a healthy bank balance. It costs 6,000G but you can save the cash if you befriend Daryl. Visit him in chapter two and you'll get a free seed maker.

The seed maker produces two bags of seeds for every item you feed it. To exploit this generosity, grow some trees but don't sell any of the produce – simply chuck all of those cheap fruits into the seed maker and sell the highly valuable seeds.





GREEN FINGERS

You can buy seeds at any time of year but they'll only grow during specific seasons. Let your crops overrun and they'll die. Follow this chart to ensure you plant at the correct time of year, and don't bother sowing seeds in the last season of the growing period unless you can water them twice per day.

VEG/FRUIT	SPRING	SUMMER	AUTUMN	WINTER
Tomato	✓	✓	✓	✗
Watermelon	✓	✓	✓	✗
Turnip	✗	✓	✓	✓
Strawberry	✓	✗	✓	✓
Melon	✗	✓	✓	✗
Carrot	✗	✗	✓	✓
Sweet potato	✗	✗	✓	✗
Potato	✓	✗	✗	✓

NGC TOP TIP

HERE, BOY!

Double-click the right shoulder button to summon your horse from anywhere in the valley.

THE CAST

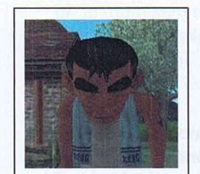
Your guide to the population of Forget-Me-Not Valley…



NGC TOP TIP

BEST FRIENDS

So how do you make friends with people? Just give them a present every day for one season.



Takakura
Handyman
Likes: Your home cooking



Carter
Archaeologist
Likes: Melons, sashimi



Flora
Archaeologist
Likes: Fish



Vesta
Earth mother
Likes: Milk, flowers, crystals



Marlin
Lad
Likes: S-rank veggies, records, potions



Daryl
Scientist
Likes: Fossils



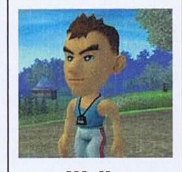
Romana
Old lady
Likes: Milk, flowers, coins



Lumina
Pianist
Likes: Flowers, cake



Sebastian
Butler
Likes: Dairy produce, archaeology



Wally
Health freak
Likes: Dairy produce



Chris
Secretary
Likes: Flowers, milk



Kate
Tomboy
Likes: Flowers



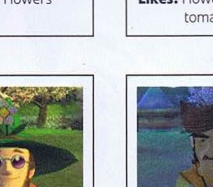
Kassey
Firework maker
Likes: Flowers, crystals, tomatoes



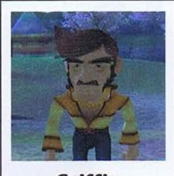
Patrick
Firework maker
Likes: Flowers, crystals, eggs, fish



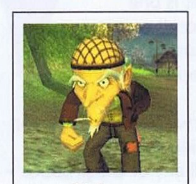
Tim
Innkeeper
Likes: Dairy produce



Gustafa
Leprechaun
Likes: Flowers, artifacts



Griffin
Barman
Likes: Crystals, coins, fish



Galen
Old geezer
Likes: Apples



Nina
Dead woman walking
Likes: Flowers, milk



Hugh
Kid
Likes: Milk, coins



Cody
Artist
Likes: Flowers, crystals, bones

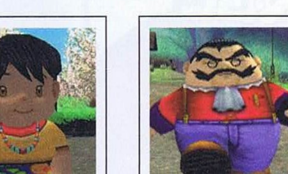


Hardy
Quack
Likes: Fish, flowers, bones

Mukumuku
Forest guardian
Likes: Fish

Murray
Tramp
Likes: Anything except fish

Rock
Kid
Likes: Artifacts, coins



Ruby
Cook
Likes: Flowers, tomatoes, milk



Van
Salesman
Likes: Eggs, artifacts



Samantha
Housewife
Likes: Milk, flowers

THE TIPS YOU NEED FOR THE GAMES YOU'RE PLAYING...

TIPS EXTRA



PITFALL THE LOST EXPEDITION

Look! We've found two more lost expeditions buried away in this.

PLAY AS NICOLE

Go to the title screen, hold down L + R and press Left, Up, Down, Up, X, Up, Up.

UNLOCK CLASSIC PITFALL GAME

Go to the title screen, hold down L + R and press X, X, Left, Right, X, B, A, Up, X

UNLOCK PITFALL II: THE LOST CAVERNS

Go to the title screen, hold down L + R and press Left, Right, Left, Right, Y, Y, Y

HARVEST MOON: FRIENDS OF MINERAL TOWN (GBA)

STOP EVENTS

This is especially important if you wish to ensure that your love rivals' heart events (when they have a significant interlude with a lady) don't take place. When you enter a building or area, make sure that you're carrying something in your hands and the event won't happen. You gooseberry.

HINT: UPGRADE YOUR HOUSE

This takes a lot of money, but you can't get married until you've had an extension built on your house and you've bought everything to go in it – yes, even the extremely expensive rug. Watch the shopping channel regularly so you don't miss an item.

UNLOCK THE MOUNTAIN CABIN

Stay married for 50 years.

UNLOCK THE BEACH HOUSE

Get 42 Connectivity Stars from the Harvest Goddess.

POKÉMON CHANNEL

We warned you off this, but if you didn't listen, you might find the following hint handy. And pay attention this time!

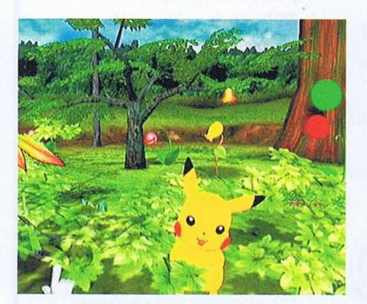
FIND PICHU BROS EPISODE 5

At night, go to Springleaf Field and hunt around for Duskull. He'll ask you a question. Get it right and he'll give you a Duskull Lamp as your reward. Now head off to Mount Snowfall and click on the sign saying 'Ruins of Truth ahead'. If you're having trouble finding it, it's off to the right.

Gengar! Use the Duskull lamp on him and you'll be able to enter the Temple of Truth, so go on inside. It's a bit gloomy, so get Pika to zap the flowers and the place will be illuminated. When he's done that, click on the sign.

See the structure? Click on it and it'll ask you a question. You've got to get the answer right – get it wrong and a plain old Golbat will appear, and then you'll have to leave the temple, come back in and start again. Get the question right and a statue of a Golbat will appear. Send Pikachu to look at it and he'll get his lardy butt stuck when he does. When you release him, the disc with the final episode of the animation will pop out.







NGC READER KNOWLEDGE!

In Friends of Mineral Town, make friends with the harvest sprites and play games with them as early as possible, even if you don't need their help. They gain experience and become useful through the games.
David Gruber, Norwich

UNLOCK THE 'HOSTED BY KASUMI' DISC

To get this disc, reconstruct the entire Pichu Bros film. On Day Six you'll receive the Star Projector from Professor Oak, Then you'll be taken to Camp Starlight to see the restored Pichu Bros episode. Back at your house, Togepi will be waiting for you and give you the disc. Watch it, report back to Oak and you've completed the game. (Thank Shigsy *that's* over...)

POKÉMON COLOSSEUM

A few tips to whet your appetite. Let us know if you've discovered any secrets...

UNLOCK HO-OH

To get this beautiful bird 'mon, beat 100 trainers on Mount Battle using your team from Story mode (and only that team!), cleanse all 48 Shadow Pokémon of their shadiness, and have a vacant slot on your PC.

UNLOCK ORRE COLOSSEUM LEVEL 50 BATTLES

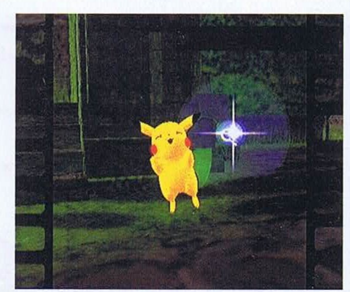
In both single and double battle, complete Phenac Stadium, Pyrite Colosseum and Under Colosseum.

UNLOCK ORRE COLOSSEUM LEVEL 100 BATTLES

In both double and single battle, complete tower Colosseum.

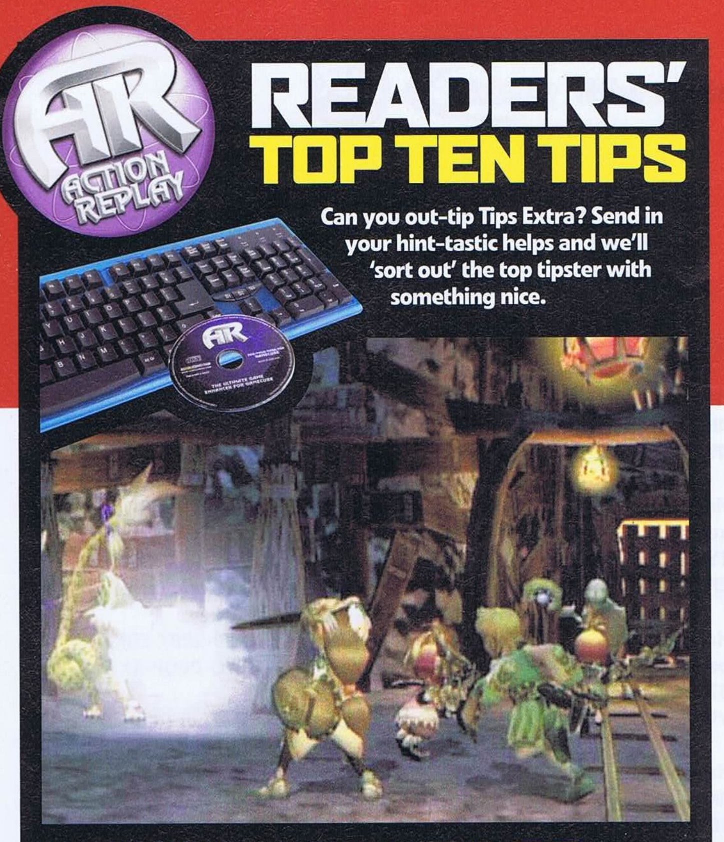
TRADE MONSTERS WITH POKÉMON RUBY AND SAPPHIRE

Go to Realgam's Colosseum and defeat the last boss. As your reward, you will win a machine that enables you to do just this.



READERS' TOP TEN TIPS

Can you out-tip Tips Extra? Send in your hint-tastic helps and we'll 'sort out' the top tipster with something nice.



1. FINAL FANTASY: CC

Friends reunited

You need two memory cards for this. Create a new file on the second memory card, then go to Bring A Friend and transfer your main character to it. Now you can go through the dungeons you've already done and get the artifacts a second time. After that, return him to your first card.
Joshua Sweeney, Merthyr Tydfil

2. CRASH NITRO KART

Party on, dude

Before the 'Game Boy' screen disappears, hold down L + R. Wait until the screen disappears. Now you can play *Crash Party*.
Conor Kelly, Stockport

3. 007 NIGHTFIRE

Ghostly goings-on

On the Snow Blind level, at the Phoenix starting base stand on the steps leading to the helicopter area. Grapple on to the platform, and if you get the angle right you should swing through the wall. If you're playing Capture The Flag, your foes won't know where you went.
Fred Phillips, Stepaside

4. MGS: THE TWIN SNAKES

Chaffing nora!

When you're fighting Metal Gear Rex, throwing chaff grenades will stop missiles from locking on to you. Keep moving and you'll be fine.
Tom Dillon, Griffydam

5. SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE

Quacking up

To get rid of the red and blue cataquacks on Gelato Beach, get them to follow you to an unwatered dune bud, knock them out, then water the bud to send them flying, killing them.
Tim Moule, March

6. MARIO PARTY 5

Points make prizes

To earn quick points for Super Duel mode, go to Free play, start a minigame and then quit. It will boost your Super Duel mode points and is ten times faster than playing games.
Lewis Norwood, Oxford

7. BILLY HATCHER

Chime to cheat

On any race level, if you hear the chime meaning that the animal has beaten you, go to the Pause menu and choose Select to re-select the level. Restart without losing a life.
William Oakley, Cambridge

8. ZELDA: WIND WAKER

Knight bust

When you're facing a knight, charge up a hurricane spin and edge close to it. Once you're close enough, let rip and the blast should take off or seriously loosen his armour.
C. Dylan & J. Porter, Preston

9. MARIO KART: DD

Quick pick

When you've picked up an item box and the contents are spinning, press X while the item you want is visible and you will receive it faster.
Sam Copping, Keighley

10. SIMPSONS HIT AND RUN

Sneaky shortcut

If you can't beat Smithers in the last mission on the first level, try this. Before you begin the mission, park the sedan so that it's a tiny bit over the line where the power plant and car park meet. Begin the mission as normal, and when you reach the plant the door will be shut, with half of the car visible. Press Y to get in, then drive into the powerplant (passing through the door). Now drive to Burns' mansion.
Abbas Khan, Tadley





Holding a lighter to the bottom of life's rich tapestry…

Dr Kitts,
I'm stuck on the boss of Dragon Roost Cavern on *The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker*. Which weapons do I use, where do I find them and how do I use them to beat him?
Isabel Wade, Guiseley

Dr Kitts notices someone has rearranged his taxidermy tools…
This would be Gohma. All you really need for victory is the grappling hook and your sword.

See the dragon tail dangling above Gohma's head? Grapple onto it and swing over to the other side of the room. This brings the roof down on his crabby head. He doesn't like that, and will fling the roof back into place. Do this three times and you'll crack his shell.

Now his shell is cracked you can damage him. Grapple onto his head and keep poking him in the eye. You'll have to do this at least a couple of times, but it will kill him.

Now grab your Heart piece and leave through the glowing bit in the middle of the room.

Dr Kitts,
My friends and I are having trouble on *Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles*. On the Tida level, even though we burn the webs blocking the gateways away with Fire they don't stay open long enough for us all to get through.
Karl Frogmore, Leeds

Dr Kitts admires his collection of stuffed patients.
If you're just using one Fire spell, that would be the source of your problems. It's not powerful enough for the job. You need to use at least two. Overlap the reticules of two Fire spells and you'll cast Fira, which is more powerful and will keep the webs open for longer.

Dr Kitts,
In *Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes*, during the battle with Psycho Mantis I keep killing Meryl. How can I hit her without killing her?
David Hollingworth, Bath

Suave and seductive Dr Kitts is himself a real ladykiller…
Ah, Meryl. There's a lady who knows her way around the business end of lethal weaponry. You can't hit her too much because she is a bit fragile. Have you tried using stun grenades on her instead? They'll knock her out just as effectively, but without the risk of sending her off into permanent oblivion.









Solid cheats for Solid Snake.

MGS: THE TWIN SNAKES

Master code
BQFR-9D2C-3VT7T
2P3E-HJPC-E5J3U

Infinite health
VXEB-3161-FJUX8
QGKW-TT7Q-R1G1P
C990-8089-5JJQC
5HE5-YTU5-VZ5BD
HFKT-K6NF-Y6GPQ

Infinite oxygen
357P-J93P-D1V79
6YBA-AKCE-D0AQX

No reload
2NMX-HZBC-5CGAZ
N6QF-4EJC-XP6M9
Z87J-URKH-A73FQ
TZ5P-PNRK-5WQEQ
5RDJ-PGXX-Q2TK9

Max grip level
13CG-23DQ-D00XU
DPMU-45WA-1R2K0

Item codes
AZQ8-2Q7R-7ZHXC

Have infinite rations
9GH9-C5QM-ZTTT1
V9QV-3EFJ-H5DBU

Have infinite medicine
RUFF-T50H-2KGW5
5E62-EQ20-TP2X1

Have infinite bandages
92P8-7XCR-WA1RY
5CD4-N8DD-5EUFA

Have infinite pentazemin
D4K0-TZD6-YUPKB
3ZZ9-WGRQ-6DJHD

Have body armour
DTP7-V104-0RUD9
AGTM-Z2XF-VWDG1

Have mine detector
M2RP-AXMP-4B7P8
EX0E-NXVE-1NQD7

Have RP sensor
FZT3-ZMBF-8962C
28QQ-8CA8-DM7NW

Have gas mask
ZMYC-1T81-580TT
ZAF1-Y81N-D070U

Have night vision goggles
WTMW-XTDB-ZPEPM
NZBJ-X2VQ-FP814

Have thermal goggles
EDVH-4FBK-JGW3D
T0R1-J8PT-4P1EN

Have scope
KZHN-T6JZ-CPJ4Z
RG8W-A9HW-TFCN3

Have digital camera
B42T-7WVG-WVEG0
0JGQ-GPFD-1D7D9

Have rope
XAH9-QJPB-298ZZ
AXTB-U9YF-9UHH9

Have Sniper Wolf's Handkerchief
E8U6-6R34-C8DKT
8TH2-BEXK-TD9YM

Have box 1
6GEP-3401-WX3R5
MQB4-KMXW-P7YU2

Have box 2
M9E2-F4VZ-3UUW2
XD9K-1JZE-5U4QU

Have box 3
J36W-A05A-8VJP8
7TQ4-QKVF-5W65D

Have ketchup
NCAE-WDXD-1CGPA
NEMZ-0RN3-HXEDM

Have SOCOM suppressor
E7FZ-ENYC-CPYMJ
G8KD-RP85-WBCR5

Have MO disc
4EVH-RX2X-RWURW
413M-XV2K-EATGG

Have level 99 keycard
TYHW-B7NT-ARGKQ
EFU1-75NE-07Y57

Have Snake's bandanna
B27J-6W8A-PRB7X
YVN4-AC2H-MTUBJ

Have stealth suit
4MJA-68XD-95ZPK
7DMC-6CMH-38GV5

Weapon codes
5U3K-B2GG-BDAA6

Have M9 (infinite ammo)
WD20-4APG-W96AZ
GYBD-G13Y-Z1UKE

Have SOCOM (infinite ammo)
HV8T-65XX-VZ9JU
GKX0-8VBU-9ZG40

Have PSG1 (infinite ammo)
JQGP-7GTN-A22UT
3ZD3-8H8J-4X27W

Have Nikita (infinite ammo)
WN60-2DP9-Z7E2N
V625-0QN3-PWVV0

Have Stinger (infinite ammo)
4PX0-T5XX-0XCAE
V9HH-JU09-ZTT9H

Have claymore (infinite ammo)
B04J-7QKJ-5ND93
VURN-K048-VZ87M

Have C4 (inf. ammo)
E3K4-BVNM-8MM9F
KRU0-MCGC-U7326

Have chaff grenade (infinite ammo)
8C2A-GU1Y-993EH
U5BP-3PJZ-XR5BF

Have stun grenade (infinite ammo)
9TB7-K3VA-JRAV5
BZKU-4GTZ-AUXVK

Have grenade (infinite ammo)
J1C5-41W7-PNQU0
TQKV-6HWK-XY3F5

Have FAMAS (infinite ammo)
MDZ3-ZM44-WY2B9
2TER-ZTAN-VRB8C

Have PSG1-T (infinite ammo)
50VR-E45R-2M9DM
MEU1-4ECZ-5VZ94

Have book (infinite ammo)
51AC-FZTH-KDVRB
ARJ2-K7CF-4D0HG

Have magazine (infinite ammo)
9E7Z-TA2J-4QGZY
Q92A-BRZM-CWQJV

Pal key codes
949R-4YBP-4X4JR

Have no PAL key
5UMF-HHWQ-B9ZWE
HF97-2MAC-KUGFG

Have warm (yellow) PAL key
0NJE-3YVE-VUW8J
KAMZ-6HVU-UBPD2

Have cold (blue) PAL key
4XZD-2P0X-EGN6R
HFYQ-DBQP-AXTMF

Have hot (red) PAL key
A2TP-B22B-ZHUNX
CX8T-A8AE-V4T0Y

Results codes
1BDB-1D9M-TB0T1

Low total game completion time
WNXR-7380-2BRJ6
RTME-MUTH-VXCXR

Saved 0 times
HAF3-BH2Z-JWC4U
TZ1Z-87EE-YQW3D

Continued 0 times
2EJK-V4P8-8PQYQ
ABZN-71CJ-Q821F

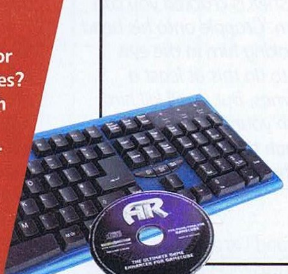
999 kills
56KR-ECV7-9TRF9
CE28-VZY7-4Q095

0 rations used
2REJ-35A1-5NFHY
3NBQ-QY1V-FJXKY



YOUR TOP TIPS SHARE THE KNOWLEDGE AND BAG YOURSELF A PRIZE...

Found an interesting tip, secret or quirky thing in one of your games? Send it into us immediately! Each month we'll stick the best into our Readers' Tips section. If your tip is the number one readers' tip, we'll send you a luvverly prize. Good, huh? But don't send us cheat codes from the net. Quirky!



HERE'S MY TOP TIP...

IT'S FOR

AND THIS IS HOW IT WORKS

Name ....

Address ....

Postcode ....

Send to:
TIPS EXTRA, **NGC**, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW
or e-mail ngc@futurenet.co.uk

If you don't want to cut up your magazine, send a photocopy instead, and continue on another bit of paper if you run out of room. Or just buy two copies of the mag. That way you can keep a spare copy in the khazi, to help focus your mind.

NEW CHALLENGES!

AND NOW… WITNESS THE DESTRUCTIVE POWER OF THESE ARMED AND FULLY OPERATIONAL GAMING LEAGUES!

I'M THE BEST

WIN!

We're into the final stretch of I'm The Best now. These are the last challenges, so if you want to enter and join in the fun, you'd better do so as soon as possible. You may have noticed last month's leader has dropped out of the leaderboard. Sometimes people ask us if they can do that. We keep everyone's scores on a database so they can start playing again if they want to.

If you've ever entered one of our Virtual Reality You challenges, check out page 110, where we've run some of our favourite photos from previous months. We've had lots of good ones sent to us and couldn't fit them all on our news pages every issue. Now we've got two pages devoted to them.

We also want to hear what separate 'championship' challenges you'd like to see in future issues. Our *Mario Kart* championship was so successful, we thought you'd enjoy the chance to play your fellow **NGC** readers at another game. We'd like to know which game that should be…

Finally, if you ever have any queries about the challenges or wish to email any photographic evidence, you can get in touch with us via the post or you can email us at **ngc@futurenet.co.uk**, putting **ITB:** in the subject line so it reaches the right person.

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE!

Mission Impossible is the part of I'm The Best where we make you put down your controller and think for a little while – a novel idea, but it seems to work. We could show you a bunch of pixels and ask you which game they're taken from. We could give you some speech from a game and ask you to name it. Whatever we do, though, you can be sure that it's a thorough test of your Nintendo gaming knowledge. And there's a new one to have a go at every issue, so if you can't do one month's, try again a month later.

THIS MONTH…

WHERE IS IT?

Nintendo games have some of the most vibrant, beautifully-drawn worlds you'll ever find, so this month we're going to test your knowledge of Ninty- and game-related places. We're going to ask you four questions and all you have to do is answer them.

Which Japanese city, famous for its geishas and beautiful temples, is Nintendo's headquarters in?

Link sails around many islands in *The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker* with the help of his magical talking boat, the King of Red Lions. Some of the islands are beautiful, some of them are scary. But on which one can you unlock the Nintendo Gallery, hmm?

Name three different countries you have to fight in in *Medal of Honor: Rising Sun*. And note: we want the names of countries, not the places battles are fought in. Just naming a town or area isn't good enough!

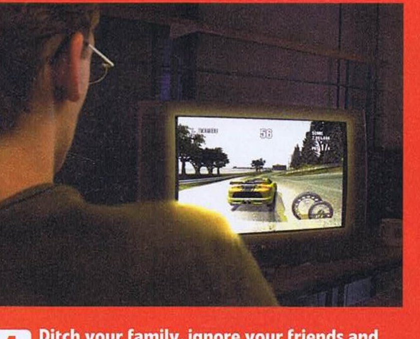
If you complete *Freedom Fighters* on Hard difficulty, what famous landmark do you get to scrap with the Russians in?

Send all four answers by the 21st May please. Completely correct answers will net the sender 40 points.



BEAT THE BEST!

Come and have a go if you think they're hard enough! This is how you turn your talent into a shot at a stonking prize.



1 Ditch your family, ignore your friends and practise until you have achieved perfection. But not beyond the cut-off date. That'd be dim.



2 Get a score above our 'To Qualify' minimum – you don't have to beat the top 5. Gather the evidence (video/photo) and send it to us.



3 Wait an issue or two and see where your score gets you. The more challenges you nail, the higher you climb in the table…

SUPER SMASH BROS. MELEE





KIRBY'S REVENGE

WE WANT Your highest numbers of KOs.
THE LAW Play in Cruel Melee mode. You must play as Kirby. All default settings apply otherwise.
TO QUALIFY Four Knock Outs.
EVIDENCE Photographic evidence will do fine.
POINTS 25

1	11	Rob Jones	Poole
2	9	Rex McGee	Trowbonia
3	5	Ewan McKenzie	Dumfries
4	4	Ben Bryce	Worthing
4	4	Mark Gibson	Dumfries

ROCK ME, AMADEUS

WE WANT Your highest score in All-Star mode.
THE LAW Must use Falco. Singing in an 80s-stylee completely optional.
TO QUALIFY 400,000
EVIDENCE Again, we're fine with photos for this one, as long as it's clear enough for us to see your score.
POINTS 20

1	831,000	Rob Jones	Poole
2	767,910	Rex McGee	Trowbridge
3	667,710	Ben Bryce	Worthing
4	630,030	Peter Bottomley	Holmes Chapel
5	625,740	Mark Gibson	Dumfries

To spice things up a bit, you'll notice that we've also included extra Random Challenges – which can be related to games, or be completely whimsical. Again, fulfil our wishes to the letter and points will be yours. Simple. There's even a Spot the Ball competition (but we've replaced it with spot the beach ball this month). Keray-zee…

VIRTUAL REALITY YOU!

Because prats win prizes!

THIS MONTH SOUL SURVIVOR

No matter how hard we try to come up with something you won't leave the house dressed as, you keep meeting our challenges. This month you've a range of options because we want you to dress as **any Soul Calibur 2 character.** We'll give you 70 points for it, and you don't have to go out in public but it's got to be a good costume. All photos must arrive by 21st May.

TIMESPLITTERS 2



BRICKATHON

WE WANT Your fastest time for completing the Bricking It: Glass Smash.
THE LAW You'll find it in Challenge mode. No cheating.
TO QUALIFY 25s
EVIDENCE Video of the entire run so we can see you doing it.
POINTS 25

1	20.0	Rex McGee	Trowbridge
2	21.4	Peter Bottomley	Holmes Chapel
3	?'??	Your score here?	Next month
4	?'??	Your score here?	Next month
5	?'??	Your score here?	Next month

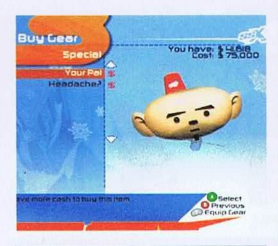
IRREPRESSIBLE!

WE WANT You to complete the Banana Chomp: Playing With Fire.
THE LAW You have to complete the level.
TO QUALIFY 20 bananas
EVIDENCE Full video evidence of the entire run so we can see you don't duck out halfway.
POINTS 35

1	22	Dominic Stroud	Gloucestershire
2	??	Your score here?	Next month
3	??	Your score here?	Next month
4	??	Your score here?	Next month
5	??	Your score here?	Next month

SSX3





MILLIONAIRE

WE WANT Your best score for Peak 3.
THE LAW Must be done in Freestyle mode (All Peak Jam). Can use any of the starting boarders – no unlockable or created ones.
TO QUALIFY 1,000,000
EVIDENCE A photo will do for this.
POINTS 25

1	2,063,000	Dave Pugh	Saffron Walden
2	1,435,909	Rex McGee	Trowbridge
3	?????	Your score here?	Next month
4	?????	Your score here?	Next month
5	?????	Your score here?	Next month

WITH JAM ON

WE WANT Your fastest time on Peak 1 Race: Snow Jam.
THE LAW Must use Kaori – no other boarders allowed. You must cross the line first as well.
TO QUALIFY 2:35
EVIDENCE We'd like to see video evidence of the full run, please.
POINTS 35

1	2:33	Rex McGee	Trowbridge
2	2:33	Dave Pugh	Saffron Walden
3	?'??	Your score here?	Next month
4	?'??	Your score here?	Next month
5	?'??	Your score here?	Next month



BEACH SPIKERS SPOT THE BALL

X MARKS THE SPOT

Ah, summer. Season of beach volleyball. Sadly, the sight of Geraint and Paul dancing around in tiny knickers on a bag of sand we bought at Homebase doesn't have quite the charm of *Beach Spikers'* lovely ladies, so we're going to share the girls with you. It's a traditional Spot The Ball this issue – all you have to do is put an X where you think the ball might be. (And, in case you're feeling opportunistic, we go on the centre of your X, so don't think that scrawling down one an inch wide will make you more likely to win.)

❑ The entry we receive marking the point closest to the ball by the 21st May wins **40 points.**

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO… I'M THE BEST, NGC MAGAZINE, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW

I'M THE BEST

The Best just got even Better…

MARIO PARTY 5





PANIC STATIONS

WE WANT Your highest score on Panic Pinball.
THE LAW You must use Waluigi. We feel sorry for him as he gets left out. Apart from that, stick to all the default settings. One player.
TO QUALIFY 22,000 points
EVIDENCE A snap of the screen showing your score.
POINTS 30

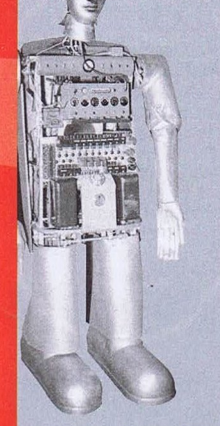
1	30,400	**Steve Brooks** Broughton Astley
2	28,760	**Rex McGee** Trowbridge
3	??,???	**Your name here** Next month
4	??,???	**Your name here** Next month
5	??,???	**Your name here** Next month

JUMP! JUMP! JUMP!

WE WANT Your furthest distance for Leaf Leap.
THE LAW You can use any character you like. Apart from that, the default settings apply.
TO QUALIFY 150m
EVIDENCE We'd like to see the whole entertaining incident on video, please.
POINTS 20

1	141	**Ewan McKenzie** Dumfries
1	141	**Mark Gibson** Dumfries
2	129	**Rex McGee** Trowbridge
3	???	**Your name here** Next month
4	???	**Your name here** Next month

Metal-macho-man! I've got to be a macho man… 0101001



DAVID GOSEN'S INHUMAN GAMING EFFICIENCY DIRECTIVE

Too many fleshthings have beaten my challenges. I am clearly being softened by associating with you. But not any more. Metal is strong! Metal is hard! The metal shall prevail!

I want you to register every gap in Tony Hawk's Underground, including the ones on the secret levels. I require you to send me a video of the Progress menu clearly showing the maximum number of gaps on every level. That's all 488.

Send video evidence. Only entries in by the 21st May will comply with the directive. Your reward for rising above your animal limitations will be 101.01 points.

KIRBY AIR RIDE



STRAIGHT RACE

WE WANT Your fastest time for a three-lap race.
THE LAW Must race on the Metal Top Ride. Three CPU opponents, level 1.
TO QUALIFY 50 seconds. You can do that!
EVIDENCE Video, so we can check that you've got the settings right.
POINTS 25

1	0'29"33	**Steve Brooks** Broughton Astley
2	??	**Your score here?** Next month
3	??	**Your score here?** Next month
4	??	**Your score here?** Next month
5	??	**Your score here?** Next month

DEEP BREATHS

WE WANT To see how many enemies Kirbs can hoover up during a race.
THE LAW You can attempt this on any level and vehicle you like. Must use default settings. You must win.
TO QUALIFY 15
EVIDENCE Video evidence of Kirby absorbing his rivals.
POINTS 35

1	??	**Your score here?** Next month
2	??	**Your score here?** Next month
3	??	**Your score here?** Next month
4	??	**Your score here?** Next month
5	??	**Your score here?** Next month

METAL GEAR



WOOOAH NELLY!

WE WANT You to kick Liquid Snake's treacherous, traitorous butt.
THE LAW No using cheats to give Snake an advantage.
TO QUALIFY 30 seconds left on the clock. You only have three to beat Liquid anyway…
EVIDENCE Clear video of the full battle.
POINTS 40

1	??	**Your score here?** Next month
2	??	**Your score here?** Next month
3	??	**Your score here?** Next month
4	??	**Your score here?** Next month
5	??	**Your score here?** Next month

SONIC HEROES



MISSION POSSIBLE

WE WANT Your best score on the bizarre Casino Park stage (level 5).
THE LAW Must be playing as Team Sonic. No Chaotix or (shame on you if you thought of it) Team Rose!
TO QUALIFY 35,000
EVIDENCE A clear snap of your score at the end of the level.
POINTS 30

1	39,840	**Mark Gibson** Dumfries
2	??,???	**Your score here?** Next month
3	??,???	**Your score here?** Next month
4	??,???	**Your score here?** Next month
4	??,???	**Your score here?** Next month

MARIO KART



DESERT DRAG

WE WANT Your *slowest* time on Dry Dry Desert.
THE LAW Must play as Yoshi and Baby Bowser. And despite going slowly, you've still got to win the race! 100cc only.
TO QUALIFY 2:00
EVIDENCE Video of the full race – sorry, but we do get people cheating at *MK*.
POINTS 30

1	2:42:571	**Ben Bryce** Worthing
2	2:37:043	**Peter Bottomley** Cheshire
3	2:34:195	**Dominic Stroud** Gloucestershire
4	2:32:325	**Rex McGee** Trowbridge
5	2:31:687	**Rob Jones** Poole

MARIO SUNSH…

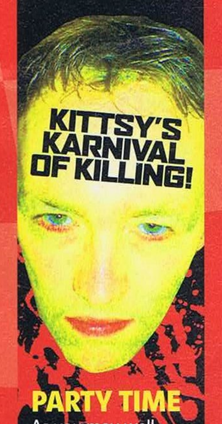


SOLID GOLD

WE WANT To know how many coins you can collect.
THE LAW Collect them on any story you like, as long as it's on the Noki Bay level.
TO QUALIFY 110 coins
EVIDENCE A picture of the totals screen (press Z to see it) clearly showing your coin haul for the location.
POINTS 20

1	190	**Rex McGee** Trowbridge
2	184	**Mark Gibson** Dumfries
3	145	**Dave Pugh** Saffron Walden
4	143	**Chris Fletcher** Stockport
5	119	**Dominic Stroud** Gloucestershire

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PARTY TIME

As you may well know, my favourite game ever is *Hitman 2*. It has a purity of purpose that few games can match. And so I am setting you a simple challenge: **complete *Hitman 2's* Invitation to a Party mission in under 2 minutes and 45 seconds.** A photograph of the end screen will suffice. Send it to me by the 21st May to win **40 points**.

1080° AVALANCHE



GATE EXPECTATIONS

WE WANT Your highest score on the Frosty Shadows Gate Challenge.
THE LAW Must play as one of the boarders available from the start of the game. Default settings apply.
TO QUALIFY 17,500
EVIDENCE Video evidence of your run.
POINTS 25

1	24,699	Andrew Mills, Dundee
2	23,309	Rex McGee, Trowbridge
3	23,129	Peter Bottomley, Holmes Chapel
4	22,369	Chris Fletcher, Stockport
5	20,589	Ewan McKenzie, Dumfries

SNOW COMPETITION

WE WANT To see how well you can do on the half pipe.
THE LAW Can be any of the boarders available from the start of the game. Must tackle the half pipe in Trick Attack mode.
TO QUALIFY 300,000
EVIDENCE Video evidence of the run in action.
POINTS 35

1	???,???	Your score here? Next month
2	???,???	Your score here? Next month
3	???,???	Your score here? Next month
4	???,???	Your score here? Next month
5	???,???	Your score here? Next month

BILLY HATCHER



EGG ROLL

WE WANT Your highest combo kill with one egg roll, (not your highest combo, one roll).
THE LAW Can play as any character, on any level. Can use any old egg you like too. Isn't that nice?
TO QUALIFY 7
EVIDENCE Video of the roll.
POINTS 30

1	??	Your score here? Next month
2	??	Your score here? Next month
3	??	Your score here? Next month
4	??	Your score here? Next month
5	??	Your score here? Next month

EAT CROW

WE WANT Your top time for defeating the 100 crows in mission 3: Dino Mountain .
THE LAW Can use no more than eight eggs. Must play as Billy. Must get an S-rank.
TO QUALIFY 10 minutes
EVIDENCE Full video run so we can see how many eggs you use for the level.
POINTS 30

1	2:30:72	Rex McGee, Trowbridge
2	3:48:75	Rob Jones, Poole
3	4:09:79	Dave Pugh, Saffron Walden
4	4:26:84	Dominic Stroud, Gloucestershire
5	??	Your score here? Next month

WORMS 3D





AAAAARRRRR!

WE WANT To see how quickly you do Deathmatch Challenge 5.
THE LAW Of the jungle.
TO QUALIFY 10:00
EVIDENCE Video of the end of the level.
POINTS 20

1	?'??	Your name here? Next month
2	?'??	Your name here? Next month
3	?'??	Your name here? Next month
4	?'??	Your name here? Next month
5	?'??	Your name here? Next month

BAA HUMBUG

WE WANT Your best time for Super Sheep Challenge 2.
THE LAW Says it's illegal.
TO QUALIFY 4:00
EVIDENCE Video of the end of the level.
POINTS 25

1	?'??	Your name here? Next month
2	?'??	Your name here? Next month
3	?'??	Your name here? Next month
4	?'??	Your name here? Next month
5	?'??	Your name here? Next month

FINAL FANTASY CC



DOWN AND OUT

WE WANT You to beat the Orc King (the Mine of Cathurgies boss).
THE LAW Single-player. Must be done on Myrrh Cycle Two. No Phoenix Downs allowed. That aside, anything goes.
TO QUALIFY 3 minutes
EVIDENCE Video.
POINTS 40

1	??	Your score here? Next month
2	??	Your score here? Next month
3	??	Your score here? Next month
4	??	Your score here? Next month
5	??	Your score here? Next month

MOOGLE SEARCH

WE WANT You to get as many Moogle stamps as you can.
THE LAW Must be in single-player for full points. If you do it in multiplayer, you'll get the appropriate fraction.
TO QUALIFY 10 stamps
EVIDENCE A snap of your Moogle card.
POINTS 20

1	??	Your score here? Next month
2	??	Your score here? Next month
3	??	Your score here? Next month
4	??	Your score here? Next month
5	??	Your score here? Next month

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO… I'M THE BEST, NGC MAGAZINE, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW

I'M THE BEST

The Best just got even Better…

ZELDA WW



GOING POSTAL

WE WANT You to sort as many letters as you can in the letter-sorting minigame on Dragon Roost Island.
THE LAW No cheating. We *will* spot it.
TO QUALIFY 15
EVIDENCE Full video of your postmastery, so we can gaze awestruck at your skills.
POINTS 30

1	30	**Andrew Mills** Dundee
2	28	**Dominic Stroud** Gloucestershire
3	27	**Mark Gibson** Dumfries
4	26	**Dave Pugh**, Saffron Walden **Peter Bottomley**, Cheshire
5	25	**Ewan McKenzie**, Dumfries **Rex McGee**, Trowbridge

PIKMIN



GROWMIN

WE WANT To see how many Pikmin you can sprout in The Final Trial.
THE LAW Of the jungle.
TO QUALIFY 150
EVIDENCE A shot of the final level results screen so we can see how many Min you grew during the level. Make sure it's a clear one.
POINTS 30

1	197	**Dave Pugh** Saffron Walden
2	192	**Rex McGee** Trowbridge
3	154	**Chris Fletcher** Stockport
4	??	**Your score here?** Next month
5	??	**Your score here?** Next month



NEW WAVE

Into the blue…

A toughie for you this month – but we know you can rise to the challenge. Playing *Wave Race: Blue Storm* in Stunt mode on the Expert difficulty setting, get at least 5,000 points on the Lost Lagoon level. Everyone who completes this challenge will get 15 points, and the person who gets the highest score will get an extra 20.





ENTRY FORM



Name ....

Address ....

Postcode ....

If you don't want to cut up your magazine, send a photocopy instead, and continue on another bit of paper if you run out of room. Defaced or illegible papers will be disqualified and burned in the furnaces of Hell, *pour encourager les autres.*

SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE
- ❑ KIRBY'S REVENGE ....
- ❑ ROCK ME ....

TIMESPLITTERS 2
- ❑ BRICKATHON ....
- ❑ IRREPRESSIBLE! ....

SSX 3
- ❑ MILLIONAIRE ....
- ❑ WITH JAM ON ....

MARIO PARTY 5
- ❑ PANIC STATIONS ....
- ❑ JUMP! JUMP! ....

KIRBY AIR RIDE
- ❑ STRAIGHT RACE ....
- ❑ DEEP BREATHS ....

1080° AVALANCHE
- ❑ GATE EXPECTATIONS ....
- ❑ SNOW COMP. ....

BILLY HATCHER
- ❑ EGG ROLL ....
- ❑ DINO BUNDLE ....

WORMS 3D
- ❑ AAAARRRRR! ....
- ❑ BAA HUMBUG ....

METAL GEAR: TWIN SNAKES
- ❑ WOOOAH NELLY! ....

SONIC HEROES
- ❑ MISSION POSSIBLE ....

MARIO KART
- ❑ DESERT DRAG ....

SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE
- ❑ SOLID GOLD ....

ZELDA WIND WAKER
- ❑ GOING POSTAL ....

PIKMIN
- ❑ GROWMIN ....

FINAL FANTASY CC
- ❑ DOWN AND OUT ....
- ❑ MOOGLE SEARCH ....

SEND YOUR ENTRIES TO… I'M THE BEST, **NGC** MAGAZINE, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW

THE LEADERBOARD
WHERE ARE YOU NOW?…

1 **Rex McGee** Trowbridge	3963.03pts
2 **Steve Brooks** Broughton Astley	2304.04pts
3 **Dave Pugh** Saffron Walden	2188.03pts
4 **Dave Every** Ellesmere Port	1849.03pts
5 **Phil "PH" Hughes** Cheshire	1527.02pts



6 **Bryan Docherty** Gourock	1832.02pts
7 **Andrew Mills** Dundee	1773.03pts
8 **Rob Jones** Poole	1747.02pts
9 **Andrew Grieve** Rotherham	1447.02pts
10 **Peter Bottomley** Cheshire	1446.01pts
11 **Chris "plasticcoated" Fletcher** Stockport	1381.01pts
12 **Dermot Ryan** Mullingar	1303.03pts
13 **Michael Rothwell** Wallasey	1302.02pts
14 **Ewan McKenzie** Dumfries	1271.01pts
15 **Martijn Heule** The Netherlands	1242.02pts
16 **Lewis Voigtländer-Ford** Milton Keynes	935pts
17 **Dominic Stroud** Gloucester	876.01pts
18 **Simon Mason** West Parley	691.01pts
19 **Mark Gibson** Dumfries	631.01pts
20 **Michael Seaward** Stanley	626.01pts
21 **Dean Hailstone** Jarrow	562.02pts
22 **Barry Lewis** Dairsie	560pts
23 **Ben Bryce** Worthing	556.01pts
24 **Christoffer Lindgren** Sweden	526.01pts
25 **David Lent** Leeds	515pts
26 **Scott Littlewood** Norwich	445pts
27 **David Williamson** Bathgate	440pts
28 **Steven Limm** Tamworth	436.01pts
29 **Adam Pollard** Dorset	410pts
30 **Daniel Sneddon** Bingley	401.01pts
31 **Gordon Yeung** Cardiff	386.01pts
32 **Josh Jones** Barnstaple	380pts
33 **Eskil Vestre** Norway	360pts
34 **Andreas Nakkerud** Norway	350pts
35 **Andrew McGrae** Southport	330pts
36 **Gareth Brownlow** Kilrea	325pts
37 **Mr S** Aberdare	315pts
38 **Mark Puddifoot** Swindon	280pts

39 **Toby Lynch** London	260pts
40 **Michael Robinson** Cumbria	256.01pts
41 **Alasdair Campbell** Elston	250pts
42 **Thomas Cox** Birchington	240pts
43 **Banjo-Fella, Sam Rogerson** Milton Keynes	235pts
44 **Hollie Eggleton** Trowbridge	230pts
45 **Julia McClay** Langley Middleton	
Jason Leverett Great Yarmouth	220pts
46 **Harold Rooney-Nugent** London, **David McDonald** Warwick	215pts
47 **James "Yellow Dart" Walker** Worthing	205pts
48 **Andy Whittle** Leigh	191.01pts
49 **Ian "PS" Steadman** Farnham Common	206.01pts
50 **David Gruber** Norwich	200pts
51 **Josh Ryan** Dursley	190pts
52 **Janne Kaitila** Finland, **Paul Gibb** Cheltenham	185pts
53 **Lee Graham** Bristol, **Robert Woodward** The Wirral	180pts
54 **Matthew Woof** Leamington Spa	165pts
55 **Daniel Livings** Watford, **Norman Glover** Cleveland,	160pts
56 **Adam Weston** Ballycranbeg	150pts
57 **Angelos Perlegkas** Athens, **Josh Symons** Bristol	145pts
58 **Michael Harvey** Ellesmere Port, **Joe Gamble** Ilkley	140pts
59 **Grant David Taylor** Edinburgh, **Michael Daniels** Chatham	135pts
60 **Karl Frogmore** Leeds	130pts

Each month, the totals will be totted up and balances displayed in the Big Table™. The top five spots at the end win goodies – Numero Uno gets not only planet-wide admiration, but hard material goods. We keep track of every entrant's scores, so you can boost your points each month and move onto or up the list. Send us your entry today!



PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Use a fast film (200 or 400 ASA).
2. If you're using a digicam then use a slower shutter speed.
3. Turn off the camera's flash (or cover it up) and draw the curtains.

PLEASE NOTE: Any doubts over the legality of your entry will lead to instant disqualification.

VIDEO TAPES

1. Plug the Gamecube TV lead into the Signal In socket of your video.
2. Connect the Signal Out socket on your video to your TV.
3. Find a spare channel on the video and search for the signal.
4. After recording the challenge, rewind the tape. We can't return tapes, sorry.

HEY! IT'S THE RETURN OF...

GAME ON!

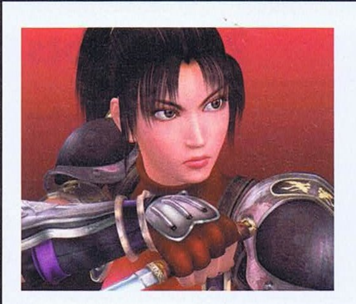
NGC READER CHALLENGES



How long can £40 last these days? A couple of hours if you spend it on a train ticket, or maybe a single woozy night if you're out pulping your mash in clubland. But it could last months if you spend it on a game and then prolong the life of said game with Game On. This is the part of the mag where you'll find **NGC** readers' ideas for playing games in the way their developers never imagined – just take a look.

If you've got a Game On idea of your own, send it in – there's a shiny new Gamecube game for the one we like best every month. Just send it to 'Game On' at the usual **NGC** address.

SOUL CALIBUR 2







HIT 'N' SLIDE

Martyn Jenkin, Cornwall

How cool is *Soul Calibur 2*? Very cool? Try this Game On idea out and it'll get a whole lot cooler. Go to the Options menu and set the number of wins to 1. Next go into Versus mode (Extra Versus mode is okay too) and select your characters. Put your health all the way up to Infinite. Go to the level select menu and, at the level select screen, find the level called Sand. Don't choose it, press left on the D-pad or with the analogue stick to find the Ice level. (You may have to unlock the level.) **The winner is the last man standing, so get sliding.** The fewer hits it takes to knock the others down, the higher your medal will be. Note – Martyn says that if you get 21 or more, it's outrageous!

HITS  **1-5**  **6-10**  **11-20**

SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE

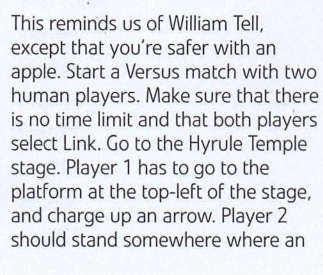






SMART BOMBS

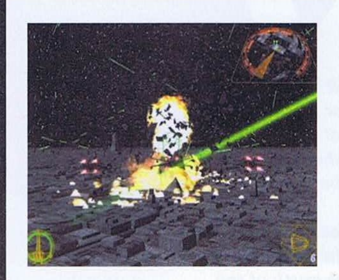
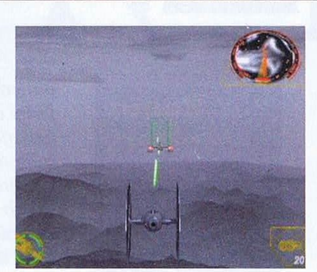
Tim Moule, March



This reminds us of William Tell, except that you're safer with an apple. Start a Versus match with two human players. Make sure that there is no time limit and that both players select Link. Go to the Hyrule Temple stage. Player 1 has to go to the platform at the top-left of the stage, and charge up an arrow. Player 2 should stand somewhere where an arrow can pass over his head comfortably, then whip out a bomb and throw it by pressing Z and Up. Player 1 has to save Player 2 by shooting the bomb in mid-air. **See how many times out of 10 one player can do it, then swap roles.** Tim suggests you vary the difficulty by increasing or decreasing the distance between the two players.

BOMBS HIT  **10**  **6**  **2**

ROGUE LEADER

TIE BREAK

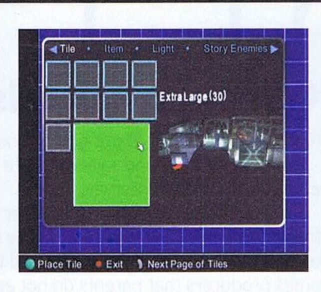
Chris Littlechild,
St Albans



Ties are deadly – wear a bow tie to a party and you'll see what we mean; it's instant social death. But we're dealing with another sort of deadly TIE here – a Twin Ion Engine fighter. The rules are really very simple: **go to any level you like and wait until you've got a TIE on your tail. Then time how long you can evade its lasers and survive for without shooting back at it.** The longer you're able to survive flying around for, the better your eventual medal will be.

MINUTES  **3 OR MORE**   **2**  **1**

TIMESPLITTERS 2



REAPER KILL

Matthew Watson,
Hull



Hate those Reaper Splitters? How would you like to keep killing them until you either run out of time or make them extinct? Go into the Map Maker, select a 3x3 tile and put a Reaper Splitter in each corner. Set them on spawn and Attack and Maximum 20. Now place yourself and a weapon somewhere – Matthew recommends using a crossbow as it's challenging and you can re-use the bolts. Set the timer to 15 minutes and fix it so you get 10 points for every Reaper Splitter you kill. **See how many points you can accrue.** If it's too easy or too hard, re-set the timer.

POINTS  **800**  **400**  **200**

NGC CHALLENGES WANTED

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN…

Have you discovered a weird and wonderful new way to play Nintendo games? Can you sum it all up in about 100 words? If you have a challenge you'd like to share with other NGC readers, then we want to hear about it. Jot down a quick explanation of what you've got to do on a piece of paper, set three suitable levels of achievement for gold, silver and bronze medals, stick it in an envelope, and send it to…

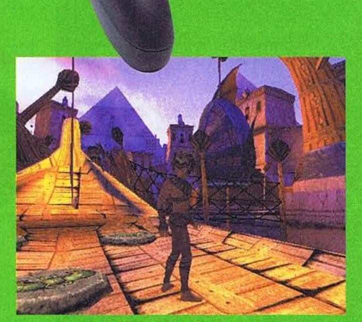
GAME ON, NGC Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Or email ngc@futurenet.co.uk, with Game On as the subject line.

We'll take challenges for absolutely any game on the good ol' 'Cube, but this month we're particularly interested in…


HARVEST MOON A WONDERFUL LIFE


METAL GEAR SOLID THE TWIN SNAKES


JAMES BOND 007 IN… EVERYTHING OR NOTHING


SPHINX AND THE CURSED MUMMY

THE BEST GET PRINTED RIGHT HERE, AND OUR FAVOURITE CHALLENGE WILL WIN A SHINY NEW GAMECUBE GAME. DEAL?

30 MONMOUTH STREET/BATH/BA1 2BW

MAILBOX

EMAIL US!

Got something to say? Run out of stamps? Guards won't let you near a pen? Then log on to the interweb and 'get' us 'at'...

ngc@futurenet.co.uk

Include your *name and address* so we know who to credit the letter to. Do it! Do it! Do it now!

STAR LETTER

The winner of the Star Letter receives a bundle of gaming gear courtesy of Joytech, incorporating two Advanced Controllers, a gold-plated RGB Scart cable, an 8Mb memory card and a GC/GBA link cable. Mint!

'Romance'

In issue 91, during the concise review of *Crystal Chronicles*, your reviewer Margaret Robertson stated that *Final Fantasy* has come home. Well, in a way that's true. I appreciate the fact that Square have attempted 'new things' with regards to the whole concept of the *FF* series but, let's be honest, we wanted an epic and that's not what we got.

I know what we Ninty purists want, and it's a full scale romance/disaster/victory smorgasbord like we enjoyed so smugly back in the early '90s, but it ain't happening. *FF:CC* is a damn good game, but it's not quite what we were waiting for.

And what about *Sword of Mana?* Obviously an acceptable game, but all Square had to do was finish that elusive translation of *Secret of Mana 3* and it would have achieved a 90+ score on GBA. You know I'm right. The stark truth is that the *Final Fantasy* family is still being strongly directed at Sony and we have to keep putting up with the scraps.

James Boyce, Belfast

You mean you'd prefer more of the same stale crap FF has become on PS2? Me, I'm happy* FF:CC *could only have been done on Gamecube. Ed



'Computer scientist'

I have a big complaint about game consoles:

You cannot pause and save the state of many games at reasonable intervals.

I have been a professional computer scientist for over 35 years now, and I would like to ask you to make it known to Nintendo and their games producers that parents do not appreciate asking their children to stop playing, only to be told, "Aww dad, I can't stop now, I can't save..." This is lazy programming on the part of games producers.

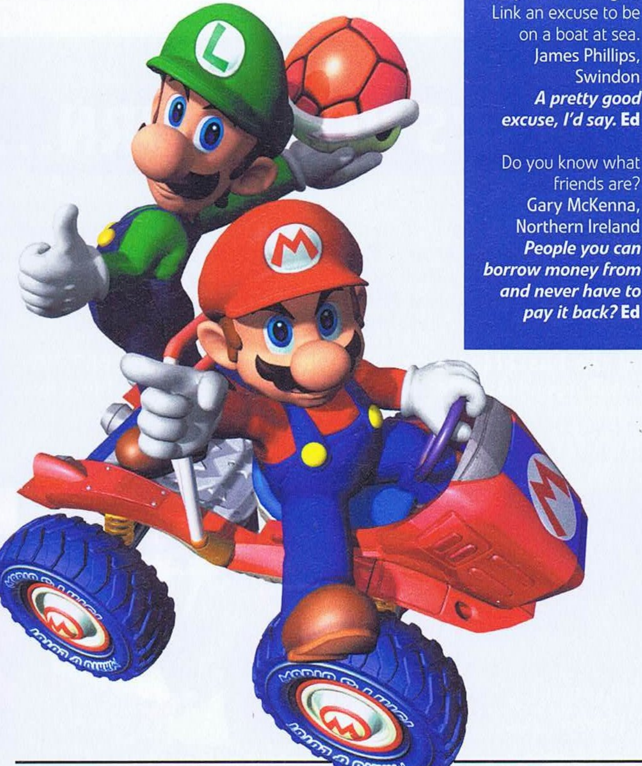
Often it takes 10, 20 or even 30 minutes for the child to reach a point in the game where he/she can save the state without losing all their efforts. This is ridiculous, insulting to parents, and infuriating to children.

I know that there is no reason why a good programmer cannot have a state-saving system which would allow game states to be saved at reasonable intervals, say every two to three minutes or so. Anyone who tells you differently is mistaken.

Worse, could it be that games programmers don't want children to be allowed to stop playing? In any case, good programmers provide systems which adapt to people's needs, not programmers' needs.

William Donelson, via email

I think it's a gameplay thing. If you had an 'instant save' button in every game, you'd have players saving whenever Mario faced a difficult jump or Link got ambushed by some tough enemies. It would spoil the flow and remove much of the challenge of a game. Also, bear in mind when a child tells a parent that the next save point is at least half an hour away, it could just be a little fib to buy some more playing time... Ed



Bonus Letters

One of these corruptions has been because I turned off the Gamecube while it was still saving, but that's still no excuse
Michael Rumsby, Alton
Isn't it? Ed

If *Mario Kart* was a fever, there would be an epidemic.
Damian Doyley, Goldthorpe
Like the lurgie? Ed

Girls had Barbie dolls and make-up.
Sophie Quinn, Peterlee
Me too. Ed

I'm still not sure if Gosen is a robot although it'll be pretty cool if he was.
Gordon Yeung, via email
Blork. Ed

The only reason they flooded Hyrule in the first place was to give Link an excuse to be on a boat at sea.
James Phillips, Swindon
A pretty good excuse, I'd say. Ed

Do you know what friends are?
Gary McKenna, Northern Ireland
People you can borrow money from and never have to pay it back? Ed

'Shelving unit'

Violent games are everywhere at the moment, and the worst has to be *Mario Kart*. I had spent about an hour getting to the last track on the All Cups tour when the evil Donkey Kong and Peach beat me by *one point*. So naturally I threw the controller at the screen and kicked a chest of drawers which had a shelving unit on top, whereupon the shelf fell on top of me and knocked me unconscious. So even if *Mario Kart* isn't actually violent, it still causes violence. Either that or I'm a hot-headed lunatic.

Josh Mclinton, Jersey

Further proof that you should only play* Mario Kart *in a padded room. Ed

'Munching games'

Why are Gamecube memory cards so small? I always seem to fill my card up quickly, especially with memory-munching games like *Hitman 2* and EA Sports titles. Only Nintendo's own games don't seem to take up much memory.

Is this really a plan by Nintendo to get you to buy more memory cards and therefore make more money, or have they just not got a clue how to make a decent memory card? Well I'm going to get my team of stealth assassins and we are going to break into Ninty headquarters and make a decent memory card for N5 so the same doesn't happen again.

Ben Donnan, Ulverston

The Gamecube memory cards were supposed to be cheap, fast and reliable. In Japan they're given away free with many games. However they have only one-sixteenth the capacity of the PS2 cards, the format that many third-party titles are primarily written for. Hence Nintendo's own stuff tends to be fairly economical, while things like* Hitman 2 *need an entire card to themselves. Interestingly, Nintendo are said to be releasing a 1,000-slot memory card, which will be around the same size as the PS2 ones. Why didn't they do this in the beginning? Chumps... Ed



HONOURABLE MENTIONS
Thanks to everyone who wrote in this month, including (but not limited to): Anthony Easton, via email; Chris McCourt, Tamworth; Shanker Varma, via email; Mark Nisbet, Galston; Evan Williams, Norwich; Lawrence Parkes, West Denton; Jonathan Trier Brikner, Denmark; Stephen Dudley, via email; Matthew Watson Jones, Howle; Matthew Duffell, Chorley; Frans van Schoor, France; Liam Whiting, via email; Rory Dixon, via email; Tom Williams, Kidderminster; Johan Lubbers, Netherlands; Matthew Pledge, Oxford; Peter Littleboy, via email; Toby, East Sussex; Nigel Lane, Cheshire; Richie Bryant, Newbury; Michael Beaton, via



'Kind of logic'

Many people complain that week after week the game sales charts are packed full of mediocre licensed junk from the likes of EA, while genuinely accomplished titles such as *Eternal Darkness*, *Pikmin* and *Metroid Prime* don't even get a look in. It is well known that Nintendo aren't generally big sellers in the UK, and people blame this on the 'casual gamer' and his or her misguided purchases.

Metroid Prime is better than almost any game to come out this decade, but it sold miserably after a very brief chart victory. Surely if sales figures reflected quality then *Metroid* would shift in the millions.

This kind of logic is all very nice, but hardened Nintendo nuts sometimes forget one very obvious fact – that Nintendo's biggest selling series by far is *Pokémon*, a string of titles that shows less progress with each new release than even EA's sports games.

Gary Roberts, via email

It's the same story everywhere. Movie sequels with big names and mega budgets always outperform the arthouse flicks. EastEnders is the biggest thing on TV. Westlife are the most successful band since The Beatles… Repetition sells. Good taste rarely does. Ed

'Damn good'

I don't want to be controversial, but here we go anyway. *Metroid Prime* is not so damn good, and while there must be plenty of people who think the same, none of them seem to have letters published in **NGC**. Graphically it's stunning, but the story is confusing and the whole thing feels linear. It's just so polished that it feels wrong, and the lack of save points and the whole 'let's scan *everything* on *every* wall to unlock a… wait for it… *photo gallery*' thing really detracts from the whole game. I'm just so tired of hearing this 'I asked Samus to marry me but she's too cool to say yes' attitude; it's really getting to me. I mean, I have bought **NGC** ever since I bought a Gamecube and I can't pick an issue that doesn't contain some reference to how fantastic *Metroid Prime* is.

Roger Southgate, Aldershot

Might I suggest a nice game of* FIFA 2004*? Ed

Bonus Letters

Rain on your wedding day? Surely that's only unfortunate, like buying a GBA SP and then finding the free game is *Crash Bandicoot*.
Adam Rak, via email
Quite. Ed

I'm a simple boy but my gaming is completely different.
Tom Newman, Norfolk
Completely? Ed

I am absolutely baffled as to why you have never mentioned *Winning Eleven 6* in your mag.
Peter Owens, Bicester
Apart from when we gave it 93% in issue 79, you mean. Ed

Is it just me or does the Prelude of Light in *Zelda Ocarina of Time* sound like a Coldplay song?
Daniel Banks, Bolton
You've spoiled it for me now. Ed

Now they have the beta version 0.3.4.3, one step away from 0.3.5, which is the next step towards 0.4.
David Gillespie, London
Blork! Blork! Ed

They were all over Toad Town. In fact some of them were a few radishes short of a salad.
Chris Spencer, Salisbury
I hate it when that happens. Ed

Hopefully these people will learn from their mistakes next time.
Mark Potton, Purley
I'm not overly confident. Ed

'Digital watch'

I might be the only one who noticed this, but on the front cover of *Medal of Honor: Rising Sun* the man is wearing a digital watch on his left hand. Digital watches were invented 20 years ago and weren't around in 1941!

Lucy Toner, Ireland

How can you tell it's digital when you can't see the face? And it's his right hand too. Ed



'Walk in the park'

Games today are getting way too hard. People should realise that making games nearly impossible to complete won't make them stand a better chance in the market. I'm not a crap gamer but getting every character on *TimeSplitters 2* and every emblem in *Sonic Adventure 2* isn't exactly a walk in the park. Sometimes I just feel like snapping the disc in two and throwing it right out the window. I bet everyone has a few games on their shelves which are left there unfinished.

Danyal Javed, Luton

Like Geraint's copy of* Ikaruga*. Ed

'Blindly following'

Recently you mentioned that games like *Mario 128* would be ready for the N5's launch and how this would be great. It's not great. This is rubbish.

Honestly, what will this N5 be able to do that Gamecube can't? Let's face it, Gamecube is

CORRECTION CORNER

In issue 91's Essential list, it seems *Soul Calibur 2* was made by Nintendo. Not Namco. Not Namtenco. Ahem.
Jamie Chalmers, Codicote

Oh. You're right. Ed

In the *Four Swords* preview of issue 91, it says "We've heard rumours that the single-player game will involve players taking control of four Link's simultaneously." Four of Link's whats? I'm assuming you meant to pluralise Link, but fell down somewhere along the way. Where did this superfluous apostrophe arise from? Whoever wrote it should be shot
Jamie Findlay, Bedford

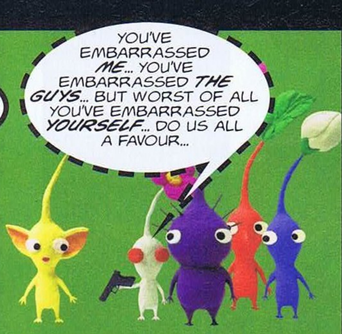
Typical bloody Evans. I'm going to punctuate his chin with my fist. Ed

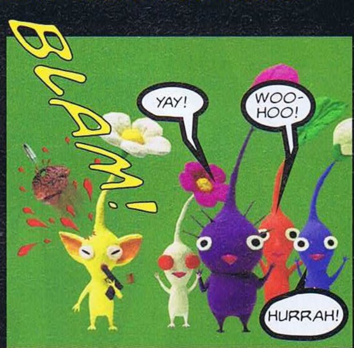
email; Kamran Sehgal, Wimbledon; Ruud Jacobs, Windmill-and-Clog Land; Gabriel Harry, via email; Chris Sandifer, Cardiff; Lewis Harvey, via email; Joseph Griffin, Buxton; Gordon Buston, Co. Limerick; Alif Ali, Huddersfield; Samuel Kristensen, Dublin; Eleanor Harby, Sheffield; Andrew Lindsay, Newport-On-Tay; Aaron Hilton, Ripon; Brynmor Jones, via email; Shailen Laxman, Fleet; Alex Cooper, Shropshire; Martin Williams, Wokingham; Will Havercroft, Bristol; Chris Vaughn, Swanage; Chris Banerji, Ponteland; Ross Angus, Campbeltown; Gary Cotter, Cork; Richard Chaplin, via email; Paul Roscoe, Adlington; Andrew Degnan, Glasgow; Sam Oakley, Sheffield; and everyone else who wrote in this month. Keep those letters coming!

GriNtendo!

SEND US YOUR NINTENDO JOKES! MAKE THEM GOOD AND YOU WIN A GAME. BUT IF MR WHITE FAILS TO SEE THE FUNNY SIDE, THE YELLOW PIKMIN DIES. HORRIBLY.
THIS MONTH: DIRE 'JOKE' BY BENT EIGIL SUMELIUS







WRITE TO... GRINTENDO, MAILBOX, NGC, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH, BA1 2BW OR EMAIL NGC@FUTURENET.CO.UK



hardly an underpowered machine is it? It took five years for developers like Square to take full advantage of the PlayStation, and games are still being developed for it. Indeed, this is one of the areas where Sony is raking in the cash. Does Nintendo still make money from N64? No, it doesn't, because it halted production as soon as Gamecube came out.

What I'm trying to say is that Nintendo shouldn't jump into this console race straight away. People will be angry that they've got to update their machine every three years. How many people update their VCR/DVD every three years? Only hardcore AV enthusiasts, I bet, and if Nintendo force people to update their console as frequently, casual gamers may be put off.

Look at the games Nintendo are developing at the moment such as *Four Swords* and *Pac-Man Vs*, all ideas based around solid gameplay rather then flashy graphics. Why do they need a more powerful console for games like this? They don't, they're just blindly following Sony's lead, something they've never done before and something they shouldn't do now.

Richard Tock, Hull

New hardware keeps people interested, even if all you get at the end of the day is a nicer-looking version of exactly the same sort of thing that was done on previous consoles. If you saw* Mario 128 *looking absolutely amazing and bundled with the N5, you'd want one, wouldn't you? Ed

'Sort of nostalgia'

I was thinking about how some games, no matter how good, don't really make you want to come back once you've finished them, and I reckon its a question of soul.

I got *XIII* recently, and enjoyed it immensely. The story is brilliant and it was an enjoyable experience in the two weeks it took me to complete it. Now I'm playing back through it again, just to relive it all.

Another prime example was the venerable and frankly beautiful *Jet Force Gemini*. When playing it again, reliving all the best moments, you get a strange feeling, the sort of nostalgia that comes from playing something so firmly etched on one's memory. Now some games are just a procession to the finish and when you've completed them that's all there is, it hasn't made much of an impression.

Stephen Mirfin, via email

Be honest now, Mr JFG fan – you trapped the camera in a corner so you could get a good look down Vela's top, didn't you? Ed



SO TELL ME THIS...

Questions troubling you? We've got the answers!*

1. Why can't I copy or move my F-Zero GX game data even when there is enough space on my other memory card?
2. Does Harvest Moon: A Wonderful Life come with a free memory card?
Johnny Rizkallah, via email

1. Like PSO, Final Fantasy and a few other games, F-Zero saves have copy protection so you can't back them up on another memory card. Really annoying, given that some third-party memory cards aren't the most reliable things in the world.
2. Nope.

1. What's up with third-party developers such as Acclaim and Eidos not supporting the Gamecube?
2. I heard a rumour that Viewtiful Joe is going to be released on the PS2. Is it true?
John Boy, via email

1. It's their choice. You could always show your appreciation of it by not 'supporting' their games on other formats in the future.
2. Yes, but we're getting* Viewtiful Joe 2. *Yay!

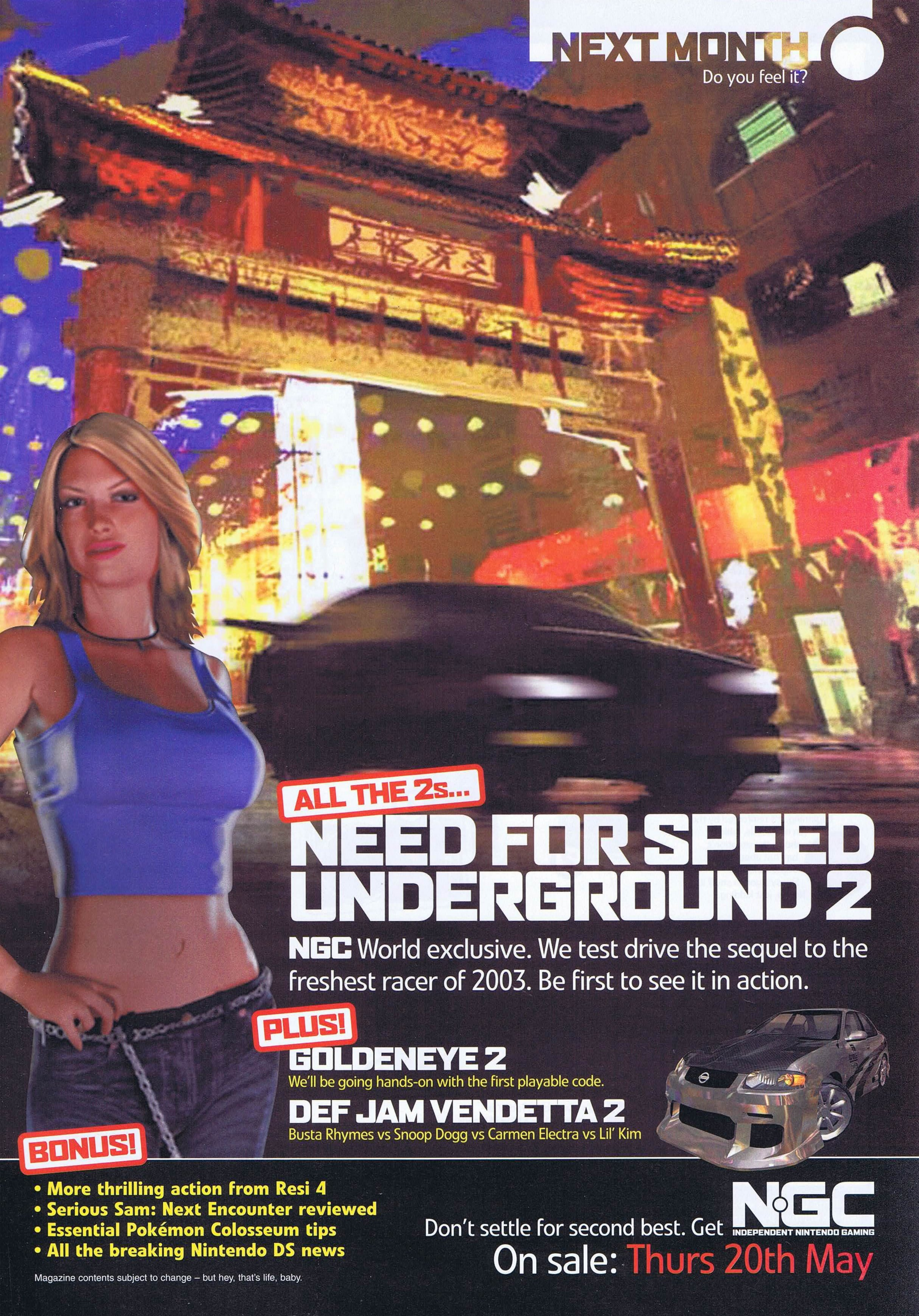
Where can I import Winning Eleven 6 and the thing that it works on?
Michael Ransome

You can buy the game and the Freeloader disc (assuming that's the 'thing' you're talking about) from many online import shops. We'd recommend looking on eBay or lik-sang.com.

I have finally worked out what the Nintendo difference is. It's that none of their games work. Whenever I put a game into my console it tells me that there is 'NO DISC'. When it does recognise the disc, after 10 minutes of opening and closing the lid, half the time it says there is an error and I must turn off the power. Of course it doesn't do this on all games, just 24 out of my 26. What the hell is going on and how do I fix it?
Jack Podmore, London

It could be that the laser lens is dirty or has been knocked out of whack. Give it a careful wipe using a lint-free cloth. We've also had success with a squirt from one of those compressed air cans you use for cleaning cameras. But why not call the Nintendo Service Centre on 0870 6060247? Gamecubes come with a two-year guarantee, so assuming yours isn't second-hand and you have the receipt, you'll get it fixed for free.

**All "answers" were gleaned using a Magic 8-Ball, a copy of Game Over, a blindfold and a drawing pin. Se defendendo, ante litem motam, res ipsa loquitur.* Legal Ed


NEXT MONTH
Do you feel it?
ALL THE 2s...
NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 2
NGC World exclusive. We test drive the sequel to the freshest racer of 2003. Be first to see it in action.
PLUS!
GOLDENEYE 2
We'll be going hands-on with the first playable code.
DEF JAM VENDETTA 2
Busta Rhymes vs Snoop Dogg vs Carmen Electra vs Lil' Kim
BONUS!
• More thrilling action from Resi 4
• Serious Sam: Next Encounter reviewed
• Essential Pokémon Colosseum tips
• All the breaking Nintendo DS news
Magazine contents subject to change – but hey, that's life, baby.
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PROPHESISING THE NEWS OF TOMORROW WITH REAL-LIFE FUTUROLOGY

MADAME GREENER *Predicts...*

Looking into the future through crossed eyes…

THIS MONTH: WHAT LIES IN STORE FOR NINTENDO AT E3?

1 These two show the central issue. The big deuce of Swords 'dispels doubts' and 'cuts through confusion' – clearly indicating that a full DS exposé will be the focus of Nintendo's E3. The blade also means victory – but the reversed Queen of Pentacles on top suggests Nintendo's 'way with children' will suffer. Sounds to us like DS games at the show will be designed to win over Mr Mature.

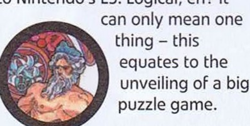
2 Left and right cards show progression from past (the loving Knave of Chalices) to future (the resourceful, self-reliant Nine of Pentacles). Suggests some close relationships could be broken – perhaps a tearful end to Nintendo's lovey-dovey partnerships with Sega, Capcom and Konami? The Nine card also means 'restraint and self-control', so don't bother crossing your fingers for big surprise games.

3 Under the surface there's intelligence and clarity in the King of Swords, but the Devil shows that Nintendo feel trapped like a cat in a shoebox. Our interpretation: Shigsy and cohorts are anxious to reveal something 'Awesome!!', but the evil Marketing Demons, they say no.





4 Look at this – three Sword cards in the layout – that's pretty significant. This means 'reason' and 'logic' are key to Nintendo's E3. Logical, eh? It can only mean one thing – this equates to the unveiling of a big puzzle game.











5 Don't worry, the Death card doesn't mean Miyamoto's on his way out. It represents one chapter coming to an end, and another beginning. It's reinforced by the Ten of Swords, which shows the situation's bad but about to get better. And that Shigsy's gonna snuff it. No, no, just kidding.





AND THE PREDICTIONS...

1. Nintendo DS: global launch dates, plus a focus on some big shooting and strategy games.
2. Big developers – Capcom? Sega? – to pull away from The Big N towards Microsoft or Sony.
3. Few games we haven't heard of: Nintendo to save the big unveilings for later in the year.
4. At least one big new puzzle game to be revealed, possibly designed by Miyamoto himself.
5. Nine new Kirby games to be announced across all Nintendo platforms. The tarot has spoken!

Madame Greener's wild claims will be verified by an independent adjudicator in NGC/95.

6 E3's 'overlooked factor' is represented by a Nine of Wands – persevering, trying repeatedly. Sounds like our much-maligned 'friend' Kirby, who despite repeated rubbishness keeps popping up on the horizon like a fat pink sun. Nine new Kirby games, anyone?



7 Hoping for a surprise-fuelled show-stopping extravaganza from Nintendo? You can forget it. The Ace of Pentacles suggests Nintendo will "prosper through common sense". Ooh, the excitement.

Thanks to Lo Scarabeo (www.loscarabeo.com) who supplied the tarot cards. It's Italian for 'The Scarab', you know.

THE METHOD TAROT CARDS



1. Bag one 'fun-size' pack of tarot cards. Box promises "spirit, grace and beauty": this actually translates to "topless ladies".



2. Use electron microscope to read tiny manual. Recommends "atmosphere". Electric coal-effect fire will have to do.



3. Plump for 'Celtic Cross' spread – ten cards to analyse past, present and future. Shigsy's photo channels Nintendo's karma or something.



4. Shove cards inside Gamecube and chant: "What lies in store for Nintendo at E3 2004?". Shuffle while remaining 'focused'.



5. Cut deck, deal ten cards. Ponder meaning while furrowing brow thoughtfully. Then give up and consult www.ready-set-tarot.com.

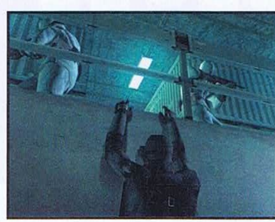
TOP 10: GUILTY PLEASURES

Gamecube moments you really shouldn't enjoy.



BODY MOVIN'
Hitman 2

Something like 15 programmers and 6 gajillion mathematical equations went into making Agent 47's victims ragdoll their way down steps and across gravel. Come now – ain't nothing wrong with a little bump 'n' grind.



FALL GUY
Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes

The speed and suddenness with which the invincible Solid Snake meets his end through the simple process of falling through a trapdoor is most amusing. "Snake? Snaaaaaaake!". "What? I've only sprained my ankle."



BIRD SHOOT
Resident Evil 0

Click, boom, squawk! The pleasure here comes from *Evil's* much-maligned controls – the not-quite-auto-aim squirting satisfaction juice directly into your belly when you score a direct hit. Look, it's okay to shoot them – they're *evil* birds, all right?



MEDIC!
Tony Hawk's 3

Ah, Mr Hawk. How easy it would be for our finger to slip off the controller and… oh, how unfortunate. You've been catapulted off your silly little roll-o-plank and landed face-first on the pavement. Nothing a few stitches can't seal up, we're sure.



FIRE FLOWERS
Pikmin

Oh, this is really good. You think you're tired of seeing plant people drowned, blown up or made dish of the day by alien ladybirds – then Pikmin start flapping about with their heads on fire. Shigsy cries every time a Pikmin dies, you know.



GOING DOWN
Soul Calibur 2

The videogame equivalent of You've Been Framed. Sidestep an excited rival and they bumble straight off the edge of a high-flying arena. "Wah!" is the sound they make as they topple towards the no doubt trampoline-free ground below.



CORNER SHOCK
True Crime

Negotiating corners at speed inevitably means smacking the odd 'bollard'. Also fun: gently nudge a bystander with your bonnet so he falls over, then wait for him to clamber back up – and start all over again. They really don't like that one bit.



FISH SLICE
The Wind Waker

Seafood-scoffing vegetarians rejoice! Fish really don't feel pain – unless this finny fella is just putting a brave face on as you pummel him with arrows. He hands over your cash reward *with arrows still sticking out of him* – brings tears to our eyes.



COW THROW
Doshin the Giant

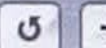
You're a skyscraper-sized deity with an entire island as your sandbox. So what would you do? Gaze gently at the cow in your hand, marvelling at this tiny miracle nestling in your big yellow fingers? Or stroll down to the coast and fling it into the sea? Right then.



DUCK SOUP
TimeSplitters 2

The classic gag. "Daddy, there's a man at the door with a bill." "Take this shotgun, love, and blow his face off." Also in *'Splitters*: monkeys mashed, calimari roasted and a guy in a lion suit bites it. RSPCA lifetime achievement award due soon.






http://www.internetcorrespondent.co.uk

YOUR INTERNET CORRESPONDENT

The best of the 'net several weeks after it happens.

• Look, we all love Pokémon. But we don't want the friendly, multicoloured and beautifully drawn skin ripped off Ruby and Sapphire to reveal the mathematical guts pumping away beneath. Chris Fritz's Pokémon Forever does just that, reducing every monster and battle to cold hard digits, and giving you tools to calculate hidden powers and 'defense rationing'. Gotta stats 'em all! (Silence).
> pokefor.greenchu.de/meowth346/

• Doing the rounds for a while now: Alexander Leon's heart-breaking three-part Mario Brothers Flash animation, which uses NES sprites to turn the innocent story of Mario stamping on turtles into an epic war-fuelled tragedy that would make JRR Tolkien blush. Luigi - dead! Toad army - slaughtered! Princess - melancholy! Laugh or cry? Can't decide.
>

• Nintendo's coyness about DS has agitated gadgets site Gizmodo so much, it's offering to buy one of the handhelds for the first person to send in a photo of The System No-One's Seen. The result: a My First Photoshop rubbish-o-rama of poorly conceived fakes. If you're an ageing Japanese executive, expect to find your photo clumsily combined with a doctored cigarette lighter any day now.
> www.gizmodo.com
>

• Bringing the PSOne-style blockiness back to Metal Gear Solid: top-notch home-made Lego versions of Solid Snake and friends. You even get Meryl in just her pants and Revolver Ocelot with his little Lego hand de-accessorised. Just a shame that the Snake himself resembles an angry, topless Robin Cook.
> www.saber-scorpion.com/lego_mgs1.htm
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> //got a link?//
Got a Nintendo-related link for Your Internet Correspondent? Email it to ngcyic@hotmail.com
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COMPENDIUM

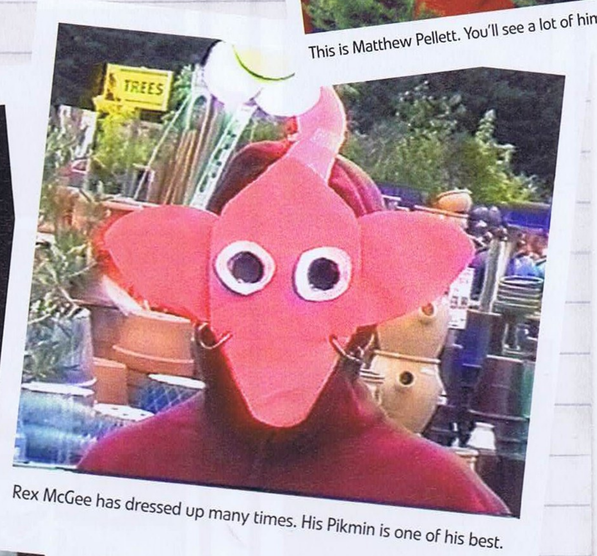
NGC readers are the best. You've got nerves of steel, undentable egos and access to viking helmets and dresses.

VIRTUAL REALITY, WE SALUTE YOU!



We can't believe you lot actually did this to yourselves. Just look at you, LOOK AT YOU…

This is Matthew Pellett. You'll see a lot of him.



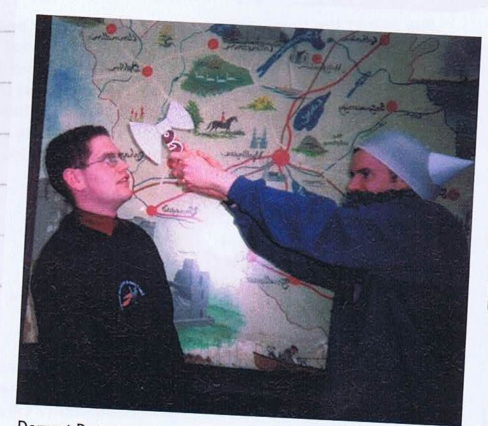
Rex McGee has dressed up many times. His Pikmin is one of his best.



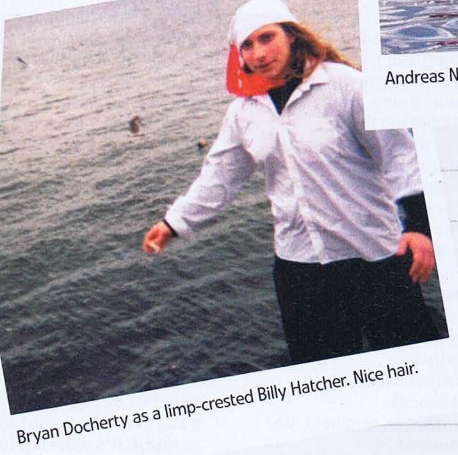
Steve Brooks made a rather interesting Boo. What's supporting him? A hula hoop? An umbrella?



Andreas Nakkerud and Eskil Vestre, the Norwegian loons.



Dermot Ryan took being a Lost Viking one step too far.



Bryan Docherty as a limp-crested Billy Hatcher. Nice hair.



Matthew Pellett. He loves this sort of thing.



Eskil Vestre – golf shouldn't be that astonishing.

Andreas Nakkerud playing Peach. Gorgeous!

Sensibly going out under cover of darkness, it's Martijn Heule as Billy Hatcher. Are the ducks asleep?

James Nicholls was one of the very best Donkey Kongas. Then again, this greengrocer is unlikely to recognise him if he comes back…

Matthew Duffell dons facepaint to become Blue Pikmin.

King Boo was a popular challenge – here's Christoffer Lindgren.

It's-a heem, Matthew Pellett. One of the few readers to enter a golf course LEGALLY and BY DAYLIGHT.

King Boo. Not a dismembered Lewis Norwood.

A real Lost Viking! Norwegian Kristian Harlem ransacks Oslo.

Send in more pics! Make us laugh! Go on...



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